A FEW THOUGHTS

ON

THE SCIENCE OF THE SELF

OR

ATMA-VIDYA

IN SEVEN DISCOURSES

BY

G. RAMACHANDRA AIYAR, B.A., B.L.

High Court Vakil, Tinnevelly.

FIRST EDITION

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TO

ALL TRUE DISCIPLES

OF

HIS HOLINESS SRI JAGADGURU SANKARACHARYA

SRI SACHCHIDANANDA SIVABHINAVA

NRISIMHA BHARATI SWAMINAH

OF SRINGERI

THIS BOOKLET IS MOST HUMBLY DEDICATED.

श्रीसच्चिदानन्दशिवाभिनव्यनृसिंहभारत्यभिधं महान्तम् ।
आब्रह्मविद्यं सकला दिशन्तं विद्या गुरुं नौमि सदात्मवन्तम् ॥

योगी यः करुणानिधिः परिलसन्स्वाराज्यसिंहासने
नामातीतपरात्ममोदरसिकप्राग्र्यो यतिक्ष्माधरः ।
वाग्मी यः सततं सुमन्दहसितश्रीभासमानाननः
श्रुत्युक्तीरमृतायिता व्यवहरन्शिष्येष्टपुष्ट्यै प्रभुः ॥

यो लोकत्रयदेशिकः शमधनस्त्यक्ताखिलेच्छः स्वयं
सर्वक्षेमकृते विरिञ्चिवनितापीठाधिपत्यं वहन् ।
शासच्छ्रौतपथं चकास्ति मुदितस्तत्पादभक्ता बुधा
ये तेभ्यः श्रुतिसंप्रदायमुकुरो ग्रन्थोऽयमद्यार्प्यते ॥

PREFACE.

THIS little book is intended for the use of those who have had the benefit of western education, but have not had time or opportunity to ascertain the fundamentals of the Aryan Hindu Religion, although they may be interested in knowing them. As the title indicates, this is no treatise on Atma Vidya, but only contains statements of some prominent facts which may be desired to be known before one would like to become an actual student of Atma Vidya, together with some observations thereon. The arrangement of the facts may not appear quite the proper one, as the discourses herein contained are partly re-written from papers read, and partly prepared from notes of speeches made, on different occasions. But, I have spared no pains to arrange as well as I could, with a view to make the whole a connected one. I have also tried to avoid the mention of unnecessary details and the use of technical words, to the extent to which the nature of the subject-matter allowed me. Some particular attention has been paid to the much disputed subjects of "Caste System" and "Image Worship" which are two of the main pillars of the Hindu Practical Religion. If the work should succeed, however slightly, in retarding the rapid growth of

materialism and in preventing the headlong descent of even a few into irreligion and scepticism, the object of the publication of this shall have been more than fulfilled.

On the suggestion of some of my friends who had occasion to know the contents of these discourses and who have the religious interests of the Aryan rising generation at heart, I have had to get this booklet printed and published, notwithstanding my feeling of considerable diffidence. I shall feel most thankful to the reader for any suggestion of improvement or alteration.

I am well aware that some views expressed in these pages, especially those relating to Evolution, the Caste System, the Study of the Upanishats and the like, may not find ready acceptance with, or may even be summarily rejected by, some readers as being, in some cases, contrary to Modern Science, in some other cases, greatly repugnant to the *first principles* of "Natural Freedom," "Equality of Men" and "Common Justice," and, in other cases, too much antiquated to be accepted in the twentieth century. All that I can say from my own humble experience is that such readers have had their friends who have once held strong opinions similar to theirs, but who, on fuller inquiry and closer study, have had to give up such opinions as mistaken ones, however reasonable these

opinions might have been appearing to them before In saying this I have only taken the liberty of an anxious fellow-student ardently wishing that none of his friends should be led away from the true path of Atma Vidya *merely by* preconceived notions. I do not claim, and I cannot, that they should accept as true the views herein expressed, without examining them critically. What I request of them is that they should bestow some serious thoughts on these views also in the course of their studies. It may also be remembered that Modern Science is itself only *learning to know* and may have its own pitfalls, that the above First Principles may not always be rightly comprehended in all their practical applications, and that Eternal Truths cannot but be *antiquated*, in the literal sense of the word, though by no means superannuated.

For the use of those *who can be* in touch with the Aryan Sacred Literature, some Authorities are quoted, by way of foot-notes, wherever their mention is thought necessary or desirable.

In a preliminary Introduction the main points considered in these discourses are briefly stated, almost in the very words of the text.

To facilitate reference, a general Index, in reference to the discourses alone, is added in the end, making it explanatory wherever possible.

My thanks are due to my esteemed friend Mr. T. K. Balasubrahmania Aiyar, B. A., *Proprietor* of Sri Vani Vilas Press, *Srirangam*, for the great personal interest he has taken in the matter of printing this work in a neat form.

G. R.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the first discourse, which is a general one, it is attempted to show that the only reality in all is the Supreme Spirit or Self, and that the universe and the innumerable bodies in it are but the Seats or Temples of that Supreme Self. It is also pointed out that the Real Actor in all such bodies is called Jeevatma or Individual Soul. The real nature of this Jeevatma is studied in the second discourse, and in the course of such study it is seen that Jeevatma may be said to be in three states of being, as Vyavaharika-Jeevatma of the ordinary waking condition, called "Thinker", Pratibhasika-Jeevatma of the dream-state, and Paramarthhika-Jeevatma who is the witness in all the three states of waking life, of dream and of dreamless sleep, that this last, namely Paramarthhika-Jeevatma (Witness), is alone real, and that this Witness is none else than the One Universal Self.

The seeming individuality of Jeevatma (Jeevatwam) is illusive and is due to Avidya, an aspect of the *Supreme Power* of the Universal Self called *Maya* Who is the Root-cause of all separation and differentiation. The universe of phenomena, as such, has no subsisting reality, being the offspring of Maya Who has no independent existence of Her own.

The universe is shown as comprising three Principles, namely, Eswara, Jeeva and Matter that have for their causal limitations respectively Satwic Maya, Avidya and Tamasi, the three aspects of Maya (having reference to Her three primary qualities, Satwam, Rajas and Tamas). The nature of Maya is considered in the third discourse. Of these three Principles Jeeva is the one for whom the universe is in existence and is being enlivened and maintained by the Lord Eswara. The third Principle, Matter, serves also the purpose of Jeevas, because its use is only in the preparation of the bodies of Jeevas, of Lokas or Regions for the habitation of Jeevas, and of the articles of sustenance for the up-keep of the bodies of Jeevas. The essential characteristic in the Jeeva, namely, Jeevatwam or Individuality, being dependent on Avidya, the Rajasic aspect of Maya, and the universe being in existence for the Jeeva alone, it follows that the universe is preserved on account of Avidya.

In the mode of such preservation is discerned a definite course of evolution. Evolution has reference only to the Jeevatma who is active in waking life, under the influence of Avidya, called Thinker or Vyavaharika-Jeevatma. Evolution is the gradual unfolding of the nature and the powers of the Inner Reality in the Thinker, namely, the Paramarthhika

Self; it is the steady progress of the Thinker or Limited Individual Jeevatma towards the state of the Real, Unlimited, Universal Sarwatma (All-Self) in Whom he is to be finally merged in Eternal Bliss and Peace, such progress being followed by gradual subtilising or improvement in the embodiment or outward appearance of the Thinker. The Thinker is said to *evolve* when he is on the way to get out of the control of Avidya, and he is said to *involve* when he gets domineered over by the Tamasic aspect of his nature. Evolution is the *ascent* towards the state of absolute, blissful consciousness realisable on the attainment of freedom from out of the inwrapping limitation of Avidya. Evolution is completed when the Thinker, having so realised his freedom, is no more an individual Thinker, but, shines in the Infinitude of his existence as Paramarthhika Pure Self. Involution is the *descent* into ignorance and misery, the following of Tamasi. Involution being the degradation of the Jeeva for allowing Tamasi to domineer, the degree of involution in each case depends upon the extent to which Tamasi is allowed to domineer. In a large number of cases such degradation takes the form of punishment in the shape of life in the sub-human kingdom. Involution may be considered as completed when Avidya and Tamasi together have exhausted all their powers of limitation by appearing to confine the Thinker within the thickest possible wall of enclosure, so that his very

existence within may not even be suspected; in this lowest stage the Thinker being, for the time, deprived of almost all powers of feeling, he is very nearly in a sleepy (Sushuptaic) condition, as in vegetable life. The normal condition of the Thinker is maintained only in "Man". Evolution and Involution are only for man as such. The modern generally accepted Theory of Evolution, propounded by some of the Western Thinkers, that there is gradual progress from the mineral condition to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal, and from the animal to the human, is not, and cannot be, true. These and other matters relating to evolution are referred to in the fourth discourse.

Then, in the fifth discourse, four distinct, natural stages of the progress of the Thinker in evolution are marked out and these four stages are, for the sake of convenience, mentioned as "the four paths of evolution." The first is the path of obedience, the second is the path of selfish action, the third is the path of action for the good of others, and the fourth the path of absolute renunciation. It is pointed out that the four paths of evolution are discernible in the universe as a whole, in the nations of the world, in classes of men in a nation, and even in the life of the individual man. In connection with these facts, the Caste-System is dealt with somewhat in detail. The

Great Ones knowing the exact nature of the paths of real progress, and also the manifold and immense operations of the Universal Law that guides the destinies of all, have built up for the use of the Aryans, and indirectly for the use of the world at large, a kind of Social Fabric which stood firm and erect as long as Faith in such Law and Faith in the Divine origin of the System subsisted. Unfortunately at present, such Faith is being shaken by growing ignorance from within and destructive influence from without. Most of the present day evils in the Hindu Society, which are ignorantly attributed to the inherent nature of the Ancient System, are but the direct results of such blind ignorance and such ruinous influences.

At the end of the four-fold path of evolution is reached the Final Goal, the Ultimate Realisation of the Absolute Oneness of the Many in the Infinite Self. Such Realisation, which is the very end of the last path, the path of renunciation, becomes possible for him who, being duly qualified, studies the Sacred Vedic Upanishats which deal exclusively with the path of renunciation. The sixth discourse herein is devoted to the subject of "The Study of the Upanishats."

Such Realisation of the Self, again, is greatly facilitated by an intelligent adoption of the most admirable method of practical training provided in the

shape of "Image-worship." The subject of 'Image-worship' is treated in the last or seventh discourse. No other aspect of the Ancient Aryan Faith has been so much frequently attacked as the one having reference to Image-worship. Without even an attempt to know what it is, people begin to attack it from all sides, calling it by the misleading name "Idolatry." Image-worship does not mean worship of the Image itself. It means worship of the Supreme Self through, and by means of, Image. It is the process whereby the wandering mind, on whose varied activity the Thinker or Vyavaharika Jeevatma depends for his existence, is gradually brought to a centre of attraction, and thereupon its flickering tendencies are one after another removed by constant one-pointed contemplation on the nature of the One Limitless Self of Whom the Image is a manifestation under name and form, or limitation. By this process the phenomenal aspects of the object used in worship as the Image of the Supreme and, as the practice of such worship becomes strengthened, also the phenomenal aspects of the whole universe composed of similar objects, are by slow and steady degrees altogether kept out of the mind, the Inner Permanent Noumenal Self alone being contemplated upon, and the worshipper soon realises the illusive nature of the work of Maya, the Mother of the Phenomenal. Some prominent objections usually raised against Image-

worship are also considred, and it is attempted to show that such objections have no foundation whatsoever. Image-worship, instead of being the curse of Hinduism, as some may think, is as a matter of fact one of its chief exceptional merits, of which the Aryan Hindu ought to be greatly proud, and which argues the immense depth of wisdom of the Great Ones Who have prescribed it. Some of the manifold aspects or phases of such Image-worship itself each of the other Religions of the world has adopted and utilised for propaganda among people who cannot reach, and who are far out of the way of, the lofty Atma-Vidya. The Aryan Vedic Religion stands alone and supreme above all the other Religions of the world for the reason that, as regards its theories, its philosophy is so much comprehensive that the fundamental principles in all the other Faiths find in it places severally assigned to them according to their rank with reverence to the Ultimate Truth, the Absolute Oneness of the Self, and that, as regards its practical side, it is the only Religion which trains up the rising Jeeva step by step by placing him, as he progresses onwards, in full possession of the knowledge of all the details of the nature of the upward path and of all the distinguishing features of the several marked stages of that path, and by simultaneously making him pass through a practical course of training under a system of discipline varying

in strict accordance with the degree of his advancement. Such discipline is intended and necessary for removing all obstacles in the way, and all defects or impurities in the nature, of the rising Jeeva. Image-worship has an important place in the field of practical training of the student of Atma-Vidya. It comprises Guru-worship also. It, in fact, hastens the student towards the realisation of the Self in everything that is before him, and of the absolute oneness of the Self both within and outside himself.

All the Religions of the world deal with devotion through Image. While in Aryan Hinduism both mental and physical Images are used for contemplation, in the other Religions mostly mental Images alone are prescribed. Even as regards mental Images, each of these other Religions, such as Christianity, assigns *only one* particular form to the Supreme Lord and directs that every one who professes the Religion ought to contemplate on Him only through the form so prescribed. In the Aryan Faith, however, different forms are assigned to the Lord, and the devotees are directed to adopt for contemplation such alone of those forms to which their hearts are attracted. Devotion is the longing of the heart for union with the Ideal. In order that all devotees may rise in the scale of Spirituality, they are shown different Ideal Existences to aspire to from their present respective

different positions. The Supreme Self, though One and Undifferentiated, is in the Aryan Religion considered as presenting Himself as a number of different Ideals by appearing under a variety of Forms, in order to attract and elevate men of all grades of development and to turn them all in the Ways of Religion leading up to the Summit of Truth. The manifestation of the One Supreme Self as the multiplicity of Ideals is not merely imaginative, and such Ideals arise by virtue of His triple aspect (Sat-chit-ananda) generating differentiation through the corresponding triplicity of Gunas (Satwam, Rajas and Tamas) of His Power or Maya-Sakti. In the very emanation of the universe out of the Infinite, the Self puts on in succession three different, or rather, three sets of different appearances which form the Supreme Trinity of the Aryan Religion. All Ideals are but this Trinity and the numerous lesser personifications of particular aspects of this Trinity. This Aryan Trinity is also considered in the last discourse.

A FEW THOUGHTS

ON

THE SCIENCE OF THE SELF

OR

ATMA-VIDYA.

(तरति शोकमात्मवित्—छा...उप.)

DISCOURSE I.

The Temple of God.

(देहो देवालयः प्रोक्तः—मैत्रे...उप.)

Introduction.

1. Atma-Vidya is the highest science. It is the science of the Self. The Self being known there is nothing else to be known. The Self alone has real existence. Everything else is but the illusive appearance of the one Self.[1] The Self is Sat, the ultimate Noumenon: It is Chit or infinite consciousness; It is Ananda or absolute bliss.[2] It is the realisation of our oneness with

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1. ब्रह्मैव सर्वं नान्योऽस्ति । (तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्)

2. सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । रसो वै सः । (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत् ब्र—व)

the Self, in Its three-fold aspect, that is the final goal of pursuit of knowledge.[1] Such are the statements of the Revealed Religion of man. Let us try in these discourses to find out what these statements mean and imply.

Wisdom, and study of the Universe.

2. 'Life' is as inscrutable as it is common, and innumerable are the views held by men regarding the goal of individual life. To know what life is is to know its purpose. Wisdom arises from right knowledge of the purpose of life. By 'Wisdom' is meant "discrimination of truth and untruth, and proper use of knowledge of the laws of the universe, of thorough comprehension of the nature of life and its object and of the true relation between an individual life and the rest of the Universe". Without such wisdom no idea of life is perfect, and no fragments of imperfect knowledge can reflect 'Truth' in its purity and entirety.

विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म । (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्—५)
सर्वगं सच्चिदानन्दं ज्ञानचक्षुर्निरीक्षते । (आत्मबोधः)
1. तद्ब्रह्माहमिति ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्म संपद्यते ध्रुवं । (अमृतबिन्दूपनिषत्)
केवलं चित्सदानन्दो ब्रह्मैवाऽऽत्मा यथार्थतः । (सूतसंहिता—मु—ख—५)
सच्चिदानन्दमात्मानमद्वितीयं ब्रह्म भावयेत् । (वज्रसूचिकोपनिषत्)
आत्मानं सच्चिदानन्दमनन्तं ब्रह्मसुव्रत ।
अहमस्मीत्यभिध्यायेत् ध्येयातीतं विमुक्तये । (दर्शनोपनिषत्)

Such wisdom is the result of a careful study of the universe. The universe presents itself as containing differentiated objects and as exhibiting innumerable and varied events. Everywhere we see forms, everywhere appearances, and ceaseless changes are going on on all sides. What is it that is ever changing in appearance? What is it of which these are forms? There must be something real and substantial which bears these forms, which puts on these appearances. There must be something ever changeless that underlies these changing phenomena.[1] These changes, forms and appearances are impermanent and therefore unsubstantial, but 'That' must be real which is behind these manifestations and of which these are representations. Under the floating phenomenon there must be a stable noumenon. The universe may therefore be studied in its two aspects, the noumenal and the phenomenal.[2]

Classification of sciences.

3. The science which deals with the universe in its noumenal aspect is called 'Atma-Vidya'—'the Science of the Self'. The knowledge of the phenomenal side of the universe has reference to two classes of sciences, the one being the sciences of material mani-

1. सर्वा हि कार्यकरणादिविक्रिया नित्यचैतन्यात्मस्वरूपे सर्वास्पदभूते सत्येव भवन्ति । (ईशावास्योपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा)

2. लोको हि द्विविधः, आत्मलोकोऽनात्मलोकश्चेति । (जीवन्मुक्तिविवेकः १)

festation, that is, of gross matter, and the other class the science of thoughts, their resources, their development and their decline. The former may be called 'Material sciences', the latter 'Mental science', and both together 'Phenomenal sciences—Anatma-Vidya'. In these phenomenal sciences the appearances are taken as real and their laws are studied accordingly. In Atma-Vidya, the noumenal science, however, the appearances are considered as but manifestations for the time being, and the reality, the Self or Atma, is treated of as under such manifestations.

Relative value of Sciences.

4. In considering the relative value of these different sciences, it is found that the sciences of matter and of mind are auxiliary to the noumenal science[1]. The knowledge of the Self, with the consequent realisation of Supreme bliss and peace which is the aim of Atma-Vidya, is attained mainly through the knowledge of the unreal and undesirable nature of phenomenal existence.[2] The rise of this latter knowledge is in a great measure helped by a care-

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1. ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठां । द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये.........परा चैवापरा च । (मुण्डकोपानिंषत् १)
तद्ध्यग्र्यं सर्वविद्यानां प्राप्यते ह्यमृतं ततः । (मनुस्मृतिः १२–८५)

2. परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायात् । (मुण्डकोपनिषत् १)

ful study of the sciences which deal with phenomenal existence.[1] Mind, limited as it is, is not competent to conceive directly the real nature of the unlimited, absolute Self. It may be said to have some conception of the Self by knowing the unreality of the limitations that may appear to envelop the Self. Hence, to know the Self, the nature of the manifested universe and its laws may be studied directly, and the nature of the Self can, in consequence of such study, be inferred with considerable certainty. When the mode of working of the phenomenal universe is fully ascertained, and the amount of peace and happiness derivable from it, as such, known, definite knowledge arises that in this universe of limitation and change there can be no absolute happiness, nothing like Supreme bliss, no happiness without its counterpart misery—misery either antecedent or subsequent being necessary for actual individual conscious enjoyment or its memory, as the 'Law of relativity' shows,—and that, when there is such enjoyment, it is necessarily short-lived. The mode of phenomenal working may be ascertained by a careful examination of physical laws and a thorough analysis of mental states.

5. Phenomena in general may be classified

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1. पूर्वं तावदपरविद्याया विषयप्रदर्शनार्थमारम्भः। तद्दर्शने हि तन्निर्वेदोपपत्तेः। (मुण्डकोपनिषत् १—श्रीशं—भा.)

Classification of phenomena.

under three heads, namely, those relating to.—

(1) Gross matter, comprising solids, liquids, gases and ether, and life physical.

(2) Lower subtile-or-mental matter, and life "desireful" (kamic), having reference to mental states which tend to one's own enjoyment or freedom from pain, generally derivable through gross matter, and also other states of mind which originate, directly or indirectly, from such mental states and follow them agreeably thereto.

(3) Higher subtile-or-mental matter, and life "mental" (non-kamic), having reference to all states of individual consciousness other than those referred to above.

From the above it will be found that in each class of phenomena there are two sides to be considered, the matter-side and the life-side. Life in gross matter is physical energy or force. Life in the kind of matter referred to in the second class above is selfish desire. Life in pure mental matter is non-selfish thought. Considering all the classes of phenomena together, as regards "matter" and "life" by themselves, it is established that neither of them can exist without the other. They are inseparable. There is no matter without life, and no life is exhibited except through matter. There is nothing like dead matter. All that

we see, hear and otherwise sense is some representation of life. If the animal exhibits life by movement, and the vegetable by growth, the gross mineral does the same by crystallisation, attraction, repulsion, selective action and exhaustion. Whenever we think of "matter" we cannot but include "Life" in the conception, and vice versa.

Matter and Mind.

6. In the above classification of phenomena the term 'Matter' is used in connection with mental states also. Some Western psychologists however hold that matter and mind are different, and they maintain that the mind is 'unextended' while matter is 'extended'. They study the "Mind" from the point of view of 'Physical matter', and they find, comparing the mind with physical matter, that the former is not subject to the law of extension. It is, no doubt, true the conception of space appears to be intimately connected with physical matter alone. But still, if we study the 'Mind' from a higher platform and with closer observation, we find such conception not the less connected with mental states. (1):—Let us in this connection consider what "Mental state" is, adopting the definition and the analysis of 'mental states' given by the Western psychologists who hold that the 'mind' is 'unextended'. According to Dr. Bain the definition of Mind—Mind meaning the sum total of mental states—is the same as its division ; each mental state can be analysed into,

and defined as the total of, feeling, intellect and will, though in actuality any of these three cannot be experienced apart from the other two. "Feeling" is the consciousness of being affected by something external to what is affected. The notion of 'externality and internality' is necessarily implied in 'feeling'. A line of separation is, as it were, drawn between the external and the internal. The external has its existence outside the internal, and the internal beyond the external. In other words, the internal cannot *extend* beyond its internality into the external, and the external cannot *extend* into the internal. As in 'Feeling' we have the notion of externality and internality, that is, the notion of extension, in one aspect, present also in 'Intellect' and in 'Will'. The chief feature of 'Intellect' is the perception of similarity and difference. The perceiving intellect is necessarily realised as being outside the phenomena whose similarity or difference, among themselves, is perceived. Intellectual perception is possible only when the perceiving Subject and the perceived Object are realised as existing, each outside the limit of the other, the one not *extending* into the other, and when the phenomena, compared or contrasted, are themselves in existence each outside the limit of the other or others. Hence, the notion of extension forms an integral part of all intellectual processes. The same reasoning holds good in the case of "Will," 'Will' having reference to the

prompting to secure or avoid something outside the volitionary principle itself. It is thus found that, without extension being present, neither 'feeling', nor 'intellect', nor 'will', is possible to be in existence. Again, the presence of extension in mental states may be discerned by a consideration from another point of view also. Extension in the region of mind has also reference to the comprehensibility of mental states. For instance, the general feeling of sympathy for human beings alone is less extended than sympathy for all beings, human and sub-human. Similarly, an intellect which can grasp only a small number of ideas in a given time must be considered as less extended than the intellect which can receive and work on a larger number of similar ideas in the same period. The mighty will of Napolean or Hannibal is more extended than the will of a man to secure his neighbour's house. The use of the term 'extension' in these cases is not merely figurative. A mental state without extension is as inconceivable as a physical state without it. In fact, extension, which by virtue of its boundaries necessarily implies limitation, is the basis of manifestation in nature. Phenomena, of whatever kind, physical or mental, have as their common property "Extension". Where there is no extension there phenomenal manifestation cannot be. Dr. Bain would point to 'extension' as marking the difference

between 'Matter' and 'Mind'. But 'extension' marks the difference, not between 'Matter' and 'mind' inter se but between 'matter and mind' on the one side and 'Spirit or Self' on the other, between the relative, manifested or phenomenal on the one side and the absolute, unmanifested or noumenal on the other side. (2) :—Most of the Western Authors who have written on Psychology, the science of the mind, and who have really placed the thinking world under obligations to them for their clear exposition of the laws of mental states as comprehended by them, appear not to have noticed the fact that the "Mind" has its matter-side and its life-side. The matter-side in a physical state is easily recognised, because it can be seen through the physical eye and the presence of extension is directly perceived by muscular sensation. In the same way the matter-side of a mental state can be cognised by means of a sense sufficiently developed for use in the subtiler region, as is the physical eye in the physical region. Again, in physical states 'extension' has reference only to the matter-side of them, not to the life-side. In the mental phenomenon also 'extension' has reference only to its matter-side. The Western Psychologists, not knowing the existence of the matter-side of the mind, have some of them laid down the general proposition that the 'mind' is unextended. The life-side of phenomena in any region has itself no reference to extension or limitation except that

which appears to be superimposed on it by its corresponding matter-side. The life-side represents the Spirit or the essence of things[1]. The matter-side represents the forms of things. So, comparing together physical matter and the mind, with their respective two sides, it is found that both of them are subject to the law of extension. (3):—Matter in the physical region is the same in essence as matter in the mental region. The only difference is :—the former is gross, and the latter subtile. Mental matter is subtiler than physical matter, mental life or thought subtiler than physical life or force—(The subtilty or otherwise in the nature of life is because of the subtilty or otherwise of the material through which the life manifests itself. The life by itself is neither subtile nor gross and knows no differentiation. It is one and universal). Physical matter, having the property of extension, cannot be analysed into ultimate atoms having no extension. Whatever may be the minuteness of the atom it must have some length, breadth and thickness, however small. If it should have these properties, it cannot be said of it that it is incapable of further division. Any such further division or analysis, if actually made, will take away the separated constituents of the physical atom from the category of 'matter' in the popular sense of the

1. आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । (प्रश्नोपनिषत् ३)

term, namely, 'physical matter', and transfer them to subtiler regions, the regions of mind, according to the ascending gradations of subtilty of matter, and '*Extension*' subsists throughout.

Desire and happiness.

7. Thus have we in brief referred to the inter-relation of matter and mind and life physical and mental. We are told that all our troubles and bondage, as well as our relief from them, arise out of the 'mind'. Mental states are of two classes, the selfish and the unselfish. The former belong to the second class of phenomena referred to above, and the latter to the third class. Selfish mental states or Impure desires are the cause of bondage and troubles; Pure Unselfish thoughts lead to liberation and bliss.[1] The first class of phenomena, gross matter and force, by themselves do no harm to us. All our training and education ought to be in the

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1. द्वे पदे बन्धमोक्षाय निर्ममेति ममेति च ।
ममेति बध्यते जन्तुर्निर्ममेति विमुच्यते ॥ (वराहोपनिषत्)
मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं चाशुद्धमेव च ।
अशुद्धं कामसंकल्पं शुद्धं कामविवर्जितम् ॥
मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥ (अमृतबिन्दूपनिषत्)
सविषयं मनो बन्धाय निर्विषयं मुक्तये भवति । (मण्डलब्राह्मणोपनिषत्)

direction of getting rid of all kinds of desire and cultivating the opposite virtues. Let us then consider the nature of 'desire' in order that we may successfully avoid it. Almost all thinking beings of this world are influenced by desire to secure pleasures. It is desire that prompts them to action. Action then results in either pleasure or pain. In most cases the resultant pleasures are far out of proportion to the degree to which desire is stretched. Even in other cases, pleasures soon cease to be pleasures[1]; psychologists know that pleasures are not pleasures if they do not so cease to be. Cessation of pleasure is in many cases followed by positive pain. If this is so, why should all run after pleasures? The reasons are these:—

(1) The real nature of pleasure is in many cases fully understood only during and after actual enjoyment, and not before. The antecedent ideal enjoyment far exceeds in most cases the actuality in intensity.

(2) The circumstances attending the actual enjoyment of pleasures—which are considerably tempered by such circumstances—are not wholly considered or anticipated before the enjoyment begins.

(3) A reason more important than the above is:—Supreme bliss, being the inherent nature of the All-pervading Self, as will be shown later on, the

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1. श्वोभावाः (काठकोपनिषत् १)

individual experiencers, having for their basis or essence the Self, desire and attempt to secure, within the limitations put around them, something of that bliss. This however is not possible so long as these limitations are preserved.

For the above reasons every one is hunting after pleasures, the intended result of desire, although there is not much in them that is worth struggling for. We shall then take 'desire' by itself as a mental state and see whether in its own nature 'desire' is attractive. There can be no desire without there being in the mind a sort of commotion or conflict. 'Desire', when analysed, shows that there is either a memory of past experience of pleasure or a vivid imagination of future pleasure and that there is a present motive or prompting to secure that pleasure, but coupled with a present inability to grasp it. This present inability is a necessary element in desire, because, if otherwise, there will be no desire but actual enjoyment. If, however, there is neither inability nor actual enjoyment it is a state untroubled by desire, a state in which the mind has no immediate concern with the particular object of enjoyment. So, this simultaneous consciousness of conceived pleasure and of the present absence of the same, along with the present inability to enjoy it, gives rise to a state of mental disturbance of a painful character. Hence, we see that neither in desire by

itself as a mental state, nor in its resultant pleasures, is there happiness, pure and simple.

Desire and the Law of Karma.

8. Still, 'desire' we find everywhere. Everywhere we see a little of enjoyment and much suffering. Particular desires result in particular experiences of pleasure and pain. Such experiences require particular environments. By 'Environments' are meant differentiations in the external world and particular circles of connected beings. Desires, as mental states, being but subtile forces in nature, forces which must have their results, beings of particular tendencies and desires have to be placed within particular environments for properly acting out those tendencies and desires and for bringing about their appropriate results[1]. Definite environments and definite beings appear to have a kind of mutual dependence. This mutual dependence, this causal connection, as also the experiences consequent on desires, have their own law, and that is the '*Law of Karma*'. This law it is that rules the universe. It is in obedience to this law that differentiations are taking place everywhere and that pleasures and pains are distributed to all individuals according to their respective deserts. This law of Karma thoroughly accounts for differences in manifestation, differen-

1. कामान्यः कामयते मन्यमानः सकामभिर्जायते तत्र तत्र । (मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३)

ces in capabilities, opportunities and experiences. But, this law of Karma, being the law of results of desire, can have its operation only where 'desire' exists. Where there is no desire, there this law cannot be enforced. This universe, which is swayed by the law of Karma, cannot be as it is, were there not 'desire' at the bottom of it[1]. This law cannot fail of its due enforcement, and such enforcement means pain or pleasure coupled with pain. If we should really want to get out of the operation of this law, we should be prepared to keep off from us that wherein this law has its source, namely, 'desire for pleasures'. These pleasures, as already pointed out, are not worth struggling for. It follows then that the desire-side of the mind ought to be put down.[2] But, 'how far immediately?' arises the new

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1 कामो नाम महान् जगद्भ्रमयिता ।
विश्वस्य वृद्धिं स्वयमेव कांक्षन् प्रवर्तकं कामिजनं ससर्ज ।
तेनैव लोकः परिमुह्यमानः प्रवर्धते चन्द्रमसेव चाब्धिः ॥ (सर्व–वे–सि–सा–सं)

2. अभिध्यायन्वर्णरतिप्रमोदानातिदीर्घे जीविते को रमेत । (काठकोपनिषत् १)
यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।
अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥ (काठकोपनिषत् ६ बृ-उप–४.)
विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निस्पृहः ।

question. Is the desire-side of our nature altogether useless? Is it in existence only to hurl us down into the depths of misery? Is all our experience arising out of 'desire' useless? No. Desire-nature has its own use. It is through desire we come in contact with the world around us, both physical and mental. It is through such contact we are able to understand the real worth of phenomenal existence and enjoyments. And, more important than this, 'desire' has its use in another aspect also. It will be shown presently, and for that purpose also, let us consider the third class of phenomena.

Individuality and the path of knowledge.

9. This class includes all higher mental states, thoughts of pure love, aspirations of the noble kind, thoughts on science and religion. So long as any one dwells in this lofty region of thought he is not disturbed by misery and his happiness lies in his mental wealth. But there is one root of evil even in this region. The mind has been shown to have the property of extension. Extension implies limitation by virtue of its limits of boundary. The limit of extension of the mind is the limit of the mind itself. The scope of operation of the mind has reference to the limitations

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निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ (भगवद्गीता २:७१)

आशा हि परमं दुःखं नैराश्यं परमं सुखं। (भागवतं—११—८)

of the mind. The mind being in one aspect, as shown above, but 'matter' or manifestation in nature, it is different from the thinker who works through it, and still more different from the one within who merely *witnesses* the rise and fall of mental states. Limitations belong to mind and body, not to this witness who is the real Self. Still, the mind appears to super-impose its own characteristic of limitation on the Self Who for the time, being identified with the thinker, seems to function through the mind. Who the thinker is will be shown later on. It is this superimposition of limitation on the Self that gives rise to the idea of individuality. In the 'individual' we find the consciousness of 'the I and the not-I'. He, in ignorance, considers himself as one essentially separate from the rest of the universe. This idea of separateness is at the bottom of all fear[1] and hate, the two chief posts of evil. As long as this notion of exclusion, based on ignorance, is in him, that is to say, as long as there is the apparent superimposition of mind-limitation on the Self, so long the individual is in danger of falling from his height of mental glory, as the lower-or-desire-side of his mind may, in a weak moment of ignorance, regain supremacy and captivate him, culminating in the end in the experience of evil. His mind, which is only his manifestation, which does not remain always the same,

1. द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति । (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् १.)

which is impermanent and which is differentiated from other minds, is mistaken by him to be himself; and worse than this, he sometimes identifies himself with even the physical body that he wears. He does not see that his body is ever changing, second by second, while *he* remains changeless. He does not see that the body, which is said to be his at this moment, has in it no particle of the body that he wore seven years ago, as the physiologists know, while *he* is that same entity that was in existence not only before seven years, but long, long before as many Kalpas or cycles of the universe. His mind again is not himself. His mental states of to-day are different from those of yesterday, and neither of these two sets of consciousness can recognise the other, they being thorough strangers to each other. But, the Reality in man, the Self or Atma, Who is the persistent Witness of thoughts and actions and the one underlying substratum for these several phenomena, enables them to appear as connected with one another by a thread of individuality. This 'individuality' has to be raised to 'universality'. To state more correctly, the appearance of individuality in the Universal Self has to be removed, rather, realised as untrue. This realisation is possible only by knowledge or Gnana to the effect that the All-pervading One Supreme Self, the underlying Noumenon of all phenomena, appears as Individual Atma when mani-

festing through the bodies of limitation, the physical and the mental. The reality or otherwise of the Individualisation of the Self depends upon the reality or otherwise of such limiting bodies used for manifestation. That neither these bodies nor the fact of limitation with its retinue of illusion and evil can be 'real', in the proper sense of the term, will be shown later on in a future discourse. Along with the knowledge of the unreal nature of such bodies of limitation, arises also the knowledge that the manifestation of the Self through such bodies is itself not real. On the rise of such knowledge Atma is revealed in His own unlimited supreme state of bliss, beyond all fear and hate, and illusion and evil, and the oneness of the many is realised for evermore[1]. The difficulties, however, are numerous and generally insurmountable that have to be faced by the one who wants to reach this glorious height. It may not be possible for many of us all at once to venture along the Gnana-Marga, the path of knowledge, and to shake off immediately

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1. यदा ह्येवैष एतस्मिन्नदृश्येऽनात्म्येऽनिरुक्तेऽनिलयनेऽभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते। अथ सोऽभयं गतो भवति। (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्—ब्र—व. ७)

यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥ (ईशावास्योपनिषत्)

all our notions of separateness and individuality[1]. Still, the goal has to be reached. Is there no other way shown to us that may be suitable to our inferior natures? Are we compelled to take the rugged up-hill path of Gnana or be for ever fallen? Dear reader, we are not left so helpless. A smoother way also is open, though a little circuitous.

The smoother way.

10. The way is this. Let your consciousness of individuality remain with you. Be active as an individual. But, have in mind always the best ideal of unselfishness you can think of. No doubt, the nature of your ideal will depend on your present environments and on the particular stage of your present development. Whatever that ideal may be, strive to become that ideal yourself. Place that ideal always in your heart, meditate on it and worship it with all possible earnestness and fervour. As knowledge and devotion increase in you, your ideal will, of itself, grow to be nobler. Let all your actions tend to assist you in your progress towards that ideal. Be careful that none of your actions is for your individual benefit alone. Try to place your individual interests last in the consideration

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1. न हि निरुपाधिकमेव ब्रह्म मन्दबुद्धिभिराकलयितुं शक्यं।(केनोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा·४)

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते । (भगवद्गीता—१२—५)

of the benefit of your actions. When the interests of yourself and those of others come into collision, try always to give preference to the latter. In all your actions, consider yourself at once to be in the position of those whom such actions may affect, and see whether those actions are proper or improper. Never attempt to cross others' desires, at least when those desires are not improper ones. Use your desire-nature for the help of others. Do not attempt to crush it out suddenly, but use it properly. Desire to do good to others more and more ; desire to help up fallen men, whoever may they be ; let not your desires be selfish, but let them be the forerunners of a general benefit. Desire also to improve your own intellectual, moral and spiritual attainments, so as to make them the means for securing more public good. Let your desires be such that the world around you is all the better for their existence. You see, our desire-nature has its lofty use also. If you should continue to act consciously in this way for sometime, considering others' interests as your own, the ideal you worship in your heart you will find to have grown to be one of Universal Love and Bliss, and, in your progress towards that ideal, you will gradually rise above your little individuality ; and you will soon realise your oneness with the All.[1]

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1. सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ (भगवद्गीता ६—२९)

Temple of God everywhere.

11. *There* is the goal of all individualised souls. It is in that topmost region 'Truth' is seen in its natural simplicity, 'Truth' not veiled by limitation. *There* you will find no distinction between man and man, no distinction between man and other beings.[1] These distinctions are realised as the distinctions of the imagined coverings, and not of the Reality. Your body and your mind are not yourself. You are really 'That' which lies behind all these. As the life-principle in the physical region is one and universal, pervading the whole of it, so, you are That Universal Spirit, that absolute existence, that Supreme life-real, which pervades and sustains[2] all the three phenomenal regions, the physical, the Kamic or desireful and the pure mental, (Bhooh, Bhuvah, Suvah), corresponding to the three divisions of phenomena in general. These three regions, and all bodies in these three regions, are but the outer coverings, the abodes, the seats, the *Temples* of that Universal Spirit or Self. God's seat is therefore every-

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1. विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥
सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥
(भगवद्गीता. ५– १८, ६ – ९)

2. ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् । (ईशावास्योपनिषत्)

where. He is in you, He is in me, He is everywhere else. The different bodies of this universe are but His different Temples.[1] My body is His Temple; your body is another, and so every other body. The differences between one body and another are the differences in the building of the temple. The Real Occupier, the Living Idol, in all the temples is one and the same Self, Atma.[2] That Self is thoroughly indifferent about the temple and its management. He finds, under all circumstances, eternal bliss and peace within Himself. The servants of the temple are looking after its upkeep.

Temple Establishment.

12. The superintending officer in the temple, the *Manager*, the trustee, is the *Sense of individuality*. His immediate subordinate officer is the general *Accountant*, the *Mind*. (In this connection 'mind' is taken as apart from desires and the consciousness of 'I' and 'Thou', i. e.,

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1. देहो देवालयः प्रोक्तः । (स्कन्दोपनिषत्)
देहं शिवालयं प्रोक्तं सिद्धिदं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
(योगशिखोपनिषत्)

2. समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवास्थितमीश्वरम् ।
(भगवद्गीता. १३—२७. २८.)

एक एव हि भूतात्मा भूते भूते व्यवस्थितः । (अमृतबिन्दूपनिषत् .)

the consciousness of individuality). The accountant has under him a number of *Suppliers* to the temple, the *Desires*. For *receiving their supplies*, the five *senses* of hearing, seeing, feeling touch, tasting and smelling, Gnanendriyas, have been appointed. There are also certain *workmen*, the five Karmendriyas, *the organs of action*, namely, the organ of speech, hands, legs, and the two organs of discharge and excretion, appointed respectively to communicate outside the temple the orders and the wishes of the manager, to go about in the world and gather supplies and to work in the temple itself by cleaning it. Such is the establishment in the well-organised temple, man's person.

Temple-building.

13. The physical body and the mental frame form the building of the temple. The structure is built by the architects, the Agents in nature who build according to the plan supplied by the administrators of the law of Karma. This plan is not one arbitrarily prepared by these administrators themselves but it is the one wanted by the individual himself, the manager of the temple concerned. The mould is but the result of the former actions and thoughts of the individual. So the manager himself is responsible for the nature of the building, external and internal, whether it presents a beautiful or a grotesque appearance. The building consists of

several divisions, the grossest or most external of which is the physical body. In this portion of the temple you have the entrance gates of the business-quarters of the receivers of supply, the five senses, and certain parts of this portion are severally allotted to the workmen, the Karmendriyas. Immediately inside this external portion there is the second division in which the suppliers of the temple, the desires, are busy with their work. Passing through the second into the interior we reach the third portion where the general accountant, the mind, holds his office. Almost every business connected with the management of the temple is practically transacted here. Beyond this portion there is the fourth region, Thuriyasthanam, which is the abode of the Self or the God of the Temple, the Garbhagriha of the living Idol. *There* the Almighty, the Ideal of Ideal existences, shines in all His Divine Glory. A Spark from this Light seems to have passed into the third division, the region of mind, and become enshrouded, as it were, by the limitations characteristic of that region. It is this Spark, thus enshrouded by mental covering, that appears as the consciousness of 'Individuality', the 'I'[1]. This 'I'

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1. तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद्विस्फुलिङ्गाः
सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपास्तथा अक्षराद्विविधाः
सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ।

(मुण्डकोपनिषत् . २)

therefore really belongs to the fourth region. It is from this fourth region, which is the region of the Self or Atma, the other regions derive their sources of activity. Although all transactions are going on in the third division of the temple, as already stated, no business can really be done without the final orders of, or communication with, this entity of individuality, this real Actor, this Spark of Divine Light, whom the knowers call *the 'Soul' or 'Jeevatma'*. Such in brief are the several portions of the building of the 'Temple of God'. One peculiarity deserves to be noted. If you carefully examine this temple from outside inwards, you will find its several divisions or regions, as you proceed more and more into its interior, appearing more and more extensive, with a correspon- ding increase of power in those that severally function in such regions. The Kamic-or-desire-side of human nature is more extensive and powerful than the purely Physical, the Manasic or pure mental than the Kamic, and the supermanasic, the Spiritual or Atmic, than any of the other three, the region of 'the Self' being the abode of the Essence of things and as such 'All-in- cluding'. (We should bear in mind that the terms 'outside' and 'inside' in our study of the temple of God have reference chiefly to the nature of such study, superficial or deep).

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः । (भगवद्गीता १५–७.)

Temple Management.

14. As regards the internal management of the temple, though in himself the manager may be good and innocent, his qualification as manager depends upon how he deals with his subordinates in the course of the management. So long as the manager has to continue in management, he has solely to depend upon the accountant, the mind. If the accountant should fail in his proper calculation of relative pleasures and pains, the result of the miscalculation directly affects the nature of the management. The successful management of the temple depends upon the control the manager exercises over this accountant and he should therefore keep him thoroughly under his supervision ; the individual Jeeva should not allow the mind to go its own way, dragging himself along with it. The accountant, in his turn, should carefully count and examine the articles brought into the temple by the suppliers ; the mind should properly reckon and discriminate between real happiness and misery and it must not allow anything to be brought in by desires in the garb of happiness, but in fact pregnant with pain and misery. Strict orders about the same should be given to those who are employed in the receiving of supplies ; the mind should so engage the senses that they are not allowed to receive any impressions which are likely to prove baneful in the

end. With regard to the suppliers themselves, the manager should choose and employ only such as may supply the temple with genuine and useful articles, with the aid of which he may have the object of management rightly fulfilled; of the many desires that may offer themselves only a few must be retained and these few must be such as are capable of assisting the Jeeva in his upward march towards the final goal. About the building of the temple, the manager should carefully see that no objectionable or foreign matter is introduced into the substance of the building which would render the building either unsafe or unbecoming to the Divine Dweller and that the building and the premises are always kept neat. The extent to which the Divine Self shows Himself out depends considerably upon the structure of the medium, the body, physical and mental, through which He manifests Himself. Such is the nature of proper management. The immediate result of such management is this :—The real nature of the Dweller inside, of the All-Comprehending Atma, is seen stamped on the person concerned, on the temple and its officers. These become the fitting medium through which the Divine Self shines in all His manifold glory. The very sight of such a person inspires awe and reverence.[1]

1. सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते। (भगवद्गीता १४.–११)
यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते।

His desires fully indicate the absolute oneness of the many and are invariably directed towards the securing of benefit for all alike. His actions and thoughts bear the stamp of nobility and selflessness. To state briefly, you are able to see in him the very God manifesting Himself more or less fully in His various aspects. Improper management has for its result just the reverse. If the manager is careless about his business, his immediate subordinate, the mind, begins to play into the hands of desires, and these desires, having secured the favour of the mind, are all-dominant over the Gnanendriyas and the Karmendriyas, the organs of sensation and action. The whole temple is mismanaged, confusion and disorder prevail, and misery and ruin are the results. The individual becomes thoroughly powerless and selfish desire, being the virtual ruler, fixes the individual firmly on the sharp teeth of its own wheel of Karma. Such is the condition of the man of the world with little or no spiritual development.[1]

यः समः सवर्भूतेषु जीवितं तस्य शोभते ।

(संन्यासोपनिषत् .)

1. कामानुसारी पुरुषः कामाननु विनश्यति ।

(सनत्सुजातीयं १. १३.)

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति बालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम् ।

(काठकोपनिषत् ४.)

Reverence for all.

15. Nevertheless, *in him* God lives as much as in anybody else. The self in him also deserves to be worshipped. His body, external and internal, is as much the 'Temple of God'; only, it is not properly managed. We ought not to hate either the temple or its idol because the servants of the temple are not doing their work properly. Never therefore hate men of bad tendencies. We have only to pity the mismanagement and extend our helping hands as much as lies within our means and power to better the management[1]. Never hate even the one who considers you his worst enemy[2]. Always try to return 'love and pity' for 'hate', and 'help' for 'harm'. Not only towards your brother-man but even towards the brute-creation you should preserve the same attitude. In the body of the brute, as much as in man's body, there is the Divine Dweller present; the brute body is as much the temple of God, though the manager, as such, is inactive and the accountant mostly powerless; so also in the vegetable, though in it internal management is nearly at its minimum point, the manager being virtually sleeping. In fact, in every body the presence of God therein makes the body worthy of our reverence

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1. अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च । (भगवद्गीता. १२–१३)
2. समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च ।
   तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः । (भगवद्गीता १२– १८ १९.)

and worship[1].

16. This may perhaps sound a little strange to those who are able to see only the outside appearance without being able to pierce through the veil of manifestation and realise the inner Glory.

Inner truth to be known.

Whenever we see, we should see not only with the physical eye, but with the eye of discrimination also. The physical eye by itself, may not give us the required idea of things. It will be able to give us only as much idea as we will get by looking at a piece of paper on which something is written in a language unknown to us. Our eyes, no doubt, see the characters written but without conveying to us any idea of what the writing is about. The reason is, we are not able to pierce through the form of the letters into the meaning; we do not see with the eye of knowledge of the language. In the same way, our understanding may be dulled by ignorance and we may see only the form if we see with the physical eye alone. This darkness of ignorance we must remove by the light of knowledge and discrimination; and then, this form will of

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1. ईश्वरो जीवकलया प्रविष्टो भगवानिति । (जीवन्मुक्तिविवेकः).

प्रणमेद्दण्डवद्भूमावाश्वचाण्डालगोखरम् ॥ (भागवतं ११–२९)

चण्डालदेहे पश्वादिशरीरे ब्रह्मविग्रहे

एकरूपो महादेवः स्थितः सोऽहं परामृतः (सूतसंहिता. मु—ख)

itself vanish from our sight, and we will be face to face with the Inner Truth. It is then we know that every one that we see, every body that we meet, is the Self, Supreme Atma Himself, in a particular manifestation.[1]

True reverence.

17. True worship is established only on this Supreme Truth being realised. For, the object of our reverence should be known to be worthy of the same; otherwise, no genuine feeling of reverence is possible. So long as our view is limited to the external building of the temple, so long as we are caring only for the officers of the temple, and so long as our dealings are only with them, ourselves not going one step beyond the office-quarters, no pious feeling is likely to make its appearance in us. You may admire the external beauty of a man's person, you may raise his qualities to the skies,

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1. एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।
(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्)

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु
(भगवद्गीता. ९—२९)

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥
(काठकोपनिषत् . २)

सर्वं ब्रह्मैव केवलम्
(तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्).

you may even sincerely consider his pleasures your pleasures, his sufferings your sufferings, but all this does not mean pious reverence if you do not realise that, behind the external appearance and the internal qualities, there is, within the innermost region, within the Garbha-griha of the temple, *the Sacred Presence of The One Prime Root of all, the Self.*[1]

1. अन्तः शरीरे निहितो गुहायामज एको नित्यः......

(सुबालोपनिषत्)

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DISCOURSE II.

Individual Soul or Jeevatma.

(अयमात्मा ब्रह्म— मा० उप०)

Introduction.

1. It was mentioned in the last discourse that the reality in every being is the Self (Atma) Who pervades and sustains[1] all the three phenomenal regions, the physical, the lower mental and the higher mental, and shown that the universe and the several bodies in the universe are but the seats or temples of that universal Self. It was also mentioned that the real Actor in all is the Individual Soul or Jeevatma. Let us try in this discourse to study a little more fully the nature of this Jeevatma who is the Soul of all phenomenal life. A right understanding of the nature of Jeevatma means also right understanding of the nature of phenomenal life. To study thoroughly the nature of phenomenal life, it is necessary that the most complicated of phenomenal existences must be taken up and analysed. The subject of such analysis ought to have in itself all the aspects of phenomenal life exhibited.

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1. तस्मिँल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे ।

(काठकोपनिषत्. ५)

Such a subject for study, we are told, is found in 'man'. The study of man is the study of the universe.

Study of Man.

2. Man has a physical body. He has gross tendencies and desires. He has higher thoughts and aspirations. The physical body alone, for obvious reasons, cannot be man. The desires are not 'man' for they are many and they appear and disappear while 'man' continues the same all the time. Higher thoughts also for the same reason cannot be themselves 'man'. In 'man' we find, in addition, a something which rules the physical body and guides and controls desires and thoughts. I compel my physical body, while writing this, to be in a particular posture for some time. Desires which are not consistent with the ideas herein expressed are not admitted and, if they come in stealthily, they are soon forcibly ejected. Even thoughts of a higher kind which are not wanted at present are dismissed, and I am able to select only such thoughts as are required for my present purpose. So, there is a mighty Principle in man that is the master of his physical and mental activities. This master is the Real Actor, the '*Individual Self*' or '*Jeevatma*'. The study of man means the study of this Jeevatma with certain physical and mental natures. Physiology and connected sciences deal with the physical body alone. Psychology and connected sciences consider and analyse the mental

nature of man. This discourse is only intended to consider in brief the nature of 'Jeevatma' in man.

Nature of Jeevatma to be known through Agama.

3. What is 'Jeevatma'? This question relates to an existence which is, as mentioned above, beyond the physical condition and beyond the mental also. Those who have studied only the physical side of man's nature can know nothing about it. Those who are using their powers of investigation and analysis for discovering the nature of, and the laws relating to, desires and thoughts cannot directly know about Jeevatma who is beyond them. Jeevatma cannot be known through mind. Whatever is had through mind is a mental state. Jeevatma, as indicated above, is the controller of mental states, and is different from them and transcends them. Then, how is 'Jeevatma' to be known? As regards knowledge generally there are, among others, four principal ways of getting it. They are sensation or Pratyaksham, reasoning or Anumanam, authority or Agama and Self-Realisation or Swanubhava. Pratyakshagnanam is knowledge received through the five senses. Anumanagnanam is knowledge reached by process of reasoning. Agamagnanam is knowledge attained through information from the knowers. And above these three is found Swanubhava or Self-Realisation which is the most certain and conclusive of all the four. Jeevatma is be-

yond and above sensations or mental impressions got through the sense-organs. The senses cannot reach him. It is therefore said that Jeevatma cannot be the object or Vishaya of Pratyakshagnanam[1]. Nor can he be directly known by any process of reasoning. All reasonings belong to the region of mental states and can never discover Jeevatma who is beyond them, having them under his control. Therefore, we are told that Jeevatma cannot be the object of Anumanagnanam also[2]. The other two chief portals of knowledge are Agama and Swanubhava. The latter is at present out of question so far as most of us are concerned. It will be long before we shall be able to actually recognise our Swanubhava-Realisation of the true nature of our Self. As we are at present situated, our only hope is in Agama[3]. It is only through words spoken and books written by those who have had Swanubhava-ex-

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1. न सन्दृशे तिष्ठति रूपमस्य न चक्षुषा पश्यति कश्चनैनम् ।
(काठकोपनिषत् ६)

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैः । (मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३)

2. न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति नो मनः ।

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् । (केनोपनिषत् १.)
नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।
नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया । (काठकोपनिषत् ६. २.)

3. सत्यमेवं प्रत्यक्षादिभिः प्रमाणैर्न परः प्रत्याययितुं शक्यः ।

perience of the Self we may be able to ascertain the nature of the Self. If we have no faith in such words or books, we have indeed no other means of knowing about it, and we must wait until such faith comes to us. Faith is necessary and we cannot afford to despise it. In fact, in no department of knowledge can anything be known without some degree of faith in the words spoken or written by others. If faith in Agama is secured by the student of Atma-Vidya, it lays before him a vast store of information regarding the real nature of the Self[1]. By Agama is herein meant the Aryan Vedic Scripture and the philosophical and the theological works of the great Sages and Seers. In the light of Agama as thus understood, let us consider in brief the nature of Jeevatma.

Bodies of Jeevatma.

4. Jeevatma in man is generally considered to be the experiencer, thinker and actor. He ensouls the physical body, receives sense-impressions, thinks, desires and acts. Sensations, thoughts, desires and the will belong to the life-aspect of the subtle body of Jeevatma, called ‘Mental body’. In other words, they are the result

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आगमेन तु शक्यत एव प्रत्याययितुम् ।

(केनोपनिषत् श्रीशं...भा. १.)

प्रोक्तान्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ठ । (काठकोपनिषत् २.)

1. श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः । (भगवद्गीता ४. ३९.)

of the ensouling of the mental body by Jeevatma. Physical life is the result of the ensouling of the physical body, the body of flesh or Annamaya-Kosa by Jeevatma. This ensouling or enlivening takes place by this Annamaya-Kosa being kept intact and interpenetrated through and through by another subtle (yet physical)body of life-currents, named Pranamaya-Kosa. This subtle body is chiefly made of ' ether ', through which alone such currents are possible. As physical life is related to the physical kosas, so are mental states related to the mental kosas, called Manomaya-Kosa and Vignanamaya-Kosa, the lower and the higher mental bodies. These are termed ' lower ' and ' higher', respectively, because the tendency of the former is to drag the Jeeva down into worldliness, and that of the latter is to raise him up to his true Spiritual State of being. We are told there is a still subtler or finer body, a fifth one, by name Anandamaya-Kosa. This Anandamaya-kosa is unlike the other or lower four bodies in that it is not exactly a kosa or body at all, but is only the cause of the other four, and, unlike them, it forms an essential part of the nature of Jeevatma himself. Jeevatwam or the ' individuality ' of Atma exists by virtue of this Anandamaya-Kosa which is nothing else than what is generally known by the name 'Avidya', that aspect of the Power of the Universal Self which is the root of separateness and differentiation, and which is

therefore called the 'causal body', 'Karana Sariram', of the separated Individual Jeeva. The exact nature of Avidya will be considered later on in the discourse on 'Maya'. Atma without Anandamaya-Kosa or Avidya is not Jeevatma, but the All-Comprehending Sarvatma or Universal Self. Jeevatma is therefore called Avachchhinnatma or Atma individualised or cut out, as it were, or limited by Anandamaya-Kosa which creates the notion of "I and Thou" or Ahankara. Although in reality the term 'Jeevatma' denotes this Avachchinnatma, it is not understood always in this sense but is also made to apply to some phenomena which are imperfect reflections or incorrect copies of the real Jeevatma. It is because of this varied use of the term 'Jeevatma' it has been said that Jeevatma may be considered as of three kinds[1].

Pratibhasika and Vyavaharika Jeevatmas, *i. e*, Dreamer and Thinker

5. Let us take an ordinary man. In his waking moments he gets impressions from the outside world, uses them in the building up of his mind by comparing and contrasting, sends out mental forces, sometimes accompanied by physical action, and in a number of ways gathers manifold expe-

1. अवच्छिन्नश्चिदाभासस्तृतीयः स्वप्रकल्पितः ।
विज्ञेयस्त्रिविधो जीवस्तत्राद्यः पारमार्थिकः ॥
(वाक्यसुधा. ३२)

riences. He who, being within man, gathers such experiences in such waking or Jagrat condition is known by the name Vyavaharika Jeevatma whom I call, for the sake of convenience, by the name '*Thinker*' in these discourses. Let me suppose that the man is sleeping and is passing through certain dreams. In the state of dream or Swapna, as in waking moments, there is an experiencer who has his own universe about him in which he is active, experiencing pleasure and pain. These experiences, however, are not altogether original and they generally depend for their origin on the experiences of the man in his waking moments or Vyavaharika state[1]. The dream-consciousness is generally only a twisted reflection or an incorrect and imperfect copy of the waking consciousness. Some of the waking or Vyavaharika experiences are put together in new combinations in the dream condition, often without arrangement or coherence, and these dream experiences are considered real by the dreaming Jeevatma, who is himself an imperfect reflection of the Thinker. If we analyse the nature of the experiencer or Jeevat-

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पारमार्थिकः व्यावहारिकः प्रातिभासिक इति जीवस्त्रिविधः । एते जीवाः क्रमेण सुषुप्तिजाग्रत्स्वप्राभिमानिनः ।

(वासुदेवमननं. ३)

1. यद्दृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति श्रुतं श्रुतमेवार्थमनुश्रृणोति देशदिगन्तरैश्च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनः पुनः प्रत्यनुभवति । (प्रश्नोपनिषत् ४)

ma in the dream condition, we find that he is not altogether the same as the Thinker or Jeevatma of the waking condition, but, at the same time, appears as if linked to the latter and he seems to comprehend his oneness with the Thinker, having memory, during the dream, of the waking experiences to some extent, though greatly limited. The experiencer in dream is not exactly the experiencer of the waking state but is, as it were, a partial reproduction of the latter. The characteristics of the dreamer are all imperfect reflections of the characteristics of the waking Thinker. The experiencer or Jeevatma of the dream is therefore called Pratibhasika Jeevatma or 'Jeevatma by Reflection'. As soon as the dream vanishes and the man is awake, the Pratibhasika Jeevatma, whom I shall call "Dreamer", along with his own universe, disappears altogether. The Thinker recollects certain experiences of the dream, sometimes vividly, sometimes dimly. Now, a doubt may arise :—if the Dreamer is only a reflection or copy of the Thinker and therefore different from him, how is recollection of dream experiences possible? The words 'reflection' and 'copy' ought not to be understood in their ordinary sense. For want of better words these are used. What happens is this. The Thinker divides himself, as it were, during sleep, into the perceiver, the Pratibhasika Jeevatma or Dreamer, and the perceived, the Pratibha-

sika Jagat or dream-created Cosmos[1]. If we carefully examine whence the dream-seer and the dream-seen come, we find that both of them emerge from within the waking experiencer, the Thinker. No doubt, the Dreamer is not exactly the same as the Thinker, but only a partial reproduction of the latter. Still, on the termination of the dream state, both the Dreamer and the dream-Cosmos merge into their source, the waking Thinker, and it thus becomes possible for the latter to recollect the experiences of the dream-condition. When once the dream vanishes, both the perceiver and the perceived of the dream are seen to be unreal and as but impermanent dual modifications of the perceiver in man while awake. But as long as the dream continues, the Dreamer is real, and so also the dream-Cosmos. What is it that makes these appear real? It is the Moha or illusion of sleep or Nidra under whose influence the dream activity is going on. Reality of the dream and of all its experiences vanishes as soon as sleep is shaken out, and the perceiver and the perceived of the dream are no more to be found[2].

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1. स्वात्मनि संहृतश्रोत्रादिकरणः स्वप्ने महिमानं विभूतिं विषयविषयिलक्षणमनेकात्मभावगमनमनुभवति प्रतिपद्यते ।
(प्रश्नोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा. ४)

2. प्रातिभासिकजीवो यस्तज्जगत्प्रातिभासिकम् ।

Vyavaharika and Paramarthika Jeevatmas, *i. e*. Thinker and the Soul.

6. Then, let us consider the nature of the Vyavaharika Jeevatma or Thinker. The Great Ones tell us that our waking experiences are as much unreal as the dream experiences, and the thinker, our present 'I', is as much impermanent as the dreamer. No doubt, so long as our consciousness is working in the Vyavaharika condition, we, the present perceivers, are all real, and the universe around us also, in the same way as the dream experiences were real so long as the dream continued. Relatively speaking, as between the waking or Vyavaharika condition and the dream or Pratibhasika condition the latter appears to be unreal and the former real. Until the real is brought under actual experience, the unreal appears real by illusion. In the case of the dream, the creator of this illusion is Nidra or sleep. We are told there is a state which is more permanent and real than our present Vyavaharika waking state, and that what is now considered by us as real is in fact unreal. Of course, it is not easy for us to believe that our present realities are unrealities, as it is not easy for the dreamer to believe in the unreality of his dream experiences. Still, we are assured by authority that the present Thinker in man, the Vyavaharika Jeevatma, is himself

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वास्तवं मन्यतेऽन्यस्तु मिथ्येति व्यावहारिकः ॥

(वाक्यसुधा ४०)

unreal and is but a bad copy or partial reproduction of the Real or Paramarthika Jeevatma or the Soul. The Thinker bears to the Real Soul a relation analogous to that between the Dreamer and the Thinker[1]. As the dream-perceiver and the dream-cosmos are created within the Jeevatma of the waking state through sleep, so, the perceiving Thinker and the perceived universe of the waking Vyavaharika state are created within the Paramarthika Jeevatma or Soul through the *grand sleep*, the deluding Avidya, an aspect of Maya, the Root-cause of multiplicity in existence[2]. The real or Paramarthika Jeevatma creates, as it were, in himself, through the intervention of the dividing Avidya, a dual manifestation as Thinker, the Vyavaharika Jeevatma, and objects of perception, the Vyavaharika cosmos, in the same way as the Thinker creates out of himself the Subject and the Object of the dream state. The Jeeva of the waking state therefore is not in reality the same as the Soul, but is only one of his two manifestations or appearances, namely, the appearance

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1. संसारः स्वप्नतुल्यो हि रागद्वेषादिसंकुलः ।
स्वकाले सत्यवद्भाति प्रबोधे सत्यसद्भवेत् ॥ (आत्मबोधः ६)

2. यथा स्वप्नप्रपञ्चोऽयं मयि मायाविजृम्भितः ।
तथा जाग्रत्प्रपञ्चोऽपि मयि मायाविजृम्भितः ॥ (सूतसं-मु-ख ५.)

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।
अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥ (मा— उप— गौड-का)

as the Subject in the waking state or Thinker, called Chidabhasah. So long as our consciousness is working in the Vyavaharika state, this Chidabhasah or Thinker and the perceived universe around are all real. But if the deluding cause, the Great Sleep, Avidya, is removed by Para-Vidya or True-knowledge, revealed through the words of the Holy Guru, this Thinker, as also this universe, disappears altogether, and the real Paramarthika Jeeva, who appeared to be till now under the influence of the limiting and separating Avidya and all along dreaming, so to say, by creating multiplicity within himself, stands alone and supreme for evermore in the Infinitude of Sat-Chit-Ananda[1]. It should be borne in mind that by knowledge or Gnanam is meant not intellectual conception or grasp

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1. मायावशेन सुप्ता मध्ये पश्यन्सहस्रशः स्वप्नान् ।
देशिकवचःप्रबुद्धो दिव्यत्यानन्दवारिधौ कोऽपि ॥
(आत्मविद्याविलासः ६)

व्यावहारिकजीवो यस्तज्जगद्व्यावहारिकम् ।
सत्यं प्रत्येति मिथ्येति मन्यते पारमार्थिकः ॥
(वाक्यसुधा ४१)

षोडशकलाभिरुपाधिभूताभिः सकल इव निष्कलः पुरुषो लक्ष्यतेऽविद्ययेति तदुपाधिकलाध्यारोपापनयेन विद्यया स पुरुषः केवलो दर्शयितव्यः ।

(प्रश्नोपनिषत्—श्रीशां—भा ६)

which is only a mental state, but direct Self-realisation. Just when such realisation is near at hand, the unreality of our present conditions and environments becomes apparent. It is such realisation that is promised to us by the Great Ones. Only, we should be prepared to listen to their words of wisdom and to follow them in the way prescribed by them. Some of us may remember that in some of our dreams themselves we have discussed whether our then experiences were real or only dreamy. Our present discourses and discussions about the unreality of this universe are of a similar kind. If at the end of such enquiries we arrive at the conclusion that the Thinker in us and the cosmos around must be unreal, then it will become easy for us to shake off Avidya which seems to veil the Paramarthika existence and which has brought about our present limitations and the consequent degradations.

Paramarthika Jeevatma alone is real.

7. As soon as Avidya is begun to be kept at a distance by ripening Gnanam or true knowlege, Jeevatma begins to lose his characteristic Jeevatwam or individuality. He, no doubt, may remember his past sufferings and enjoyments had in the double dreamy conditions of existence, the Pratibhasika and the Vyavaharika, which have appeared over and over again; but he realises now, though he is still in the Vyavaharika state, that it was not he himself in reality that had such experiences, but

that it was a kind of shadowy being originating from himself on the occasion of his sleep under the active influence of Avidya, and that he has all along been himself in his Paramarthika state, without change or modification. He realises that, of the three Jeevatmas, the Paramarthika Jeevatma alone is real and the other two, the Thinker and the Dreamer, are in fact only a copy and a copy of a copy respectively of the Real (Paramarthika) Soul.

Unity of the Self under all conditions.

8. This Soul is the common witness of the three states of existence, the dreamy, the wakeful and of dreamless sleep or Sushupti. In the state of dreamless sleep, the Soul is self-centred in peace and bliss, without there being any activity under the influence of Avidya, and this Sushuptaic state resembles the Supreme Paramarthika state. In both the states there is the Swanubhava Realisation of the Noumenal existence, characterised by unlimited peace and bliss. The difference, however, is that, in the state of sleep, the individual is not free from Avidya, though Avidya is then in a non-active condition. The Paramarthika state, on the other hand, is one beyond and above the reach of Avidya: and, in fact, from the Paramarthika point of view, Avidya can have no existence at all of its own as will be shown in the next discourse. It is on account of the recurring active manifestation of the lingering, illusive

Avidya, the sleeper comes back to the Pratibhasika and the Vyavaharika states of existence. The Dreamer and the Thinker arise from the sleeper when the latter is actively affected by Avidya: It is activity under the influence of Avidya that preserves the existence of the shadowy or unreal Jeevatmas, the Thinker and the Dreamer[1]. This activity belongs *primarily* to that manifestation of Avidya, which creates the distinction between the actor, the action and the thing acted upon, namely, the manifestation as the 'Mind', the creator of duality. (I say 'primarily', because, even the mind cannot by itself be active without the presence of the universal source of life, the One Self, the Witness of all. Though all activity is by virtue of this One Life-giving Source, this latter cannot be Himself the actor, because, in and for Him, differentiation, necessary for action, cannot be. Though the Sun is the one source of life for the Solar system, and his presence makes all activities possible throughout his system, he is not the actor, nor is he, in the least affect-

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1. यथा स्वप्ने द्वयाभासं चित्तं चलति मायया ।
तथा जाग्रद्द्वयाभासं चित्तं चलति मायया ॥

चित्तस्पन्दितमेवेदं ग्राह्यग्राहकवद्द्वयम् ।

ऋजुवक्रादिकाभासमलातस्पन्दितं यथा ।
ग्रहणग्राहकाभासं विज्ञानस्पन्दितं तथा ॥

(मा—उप—गौड—का)

ed by such activities[1]). Bodies, physical and mental, by themselves, are not harmful. It is activity in the mental body that keeps up the two conditions of being, the Vyavaharika and the Pratibhasika. Mental activity along with physical wakefulness, to put it more properly, mental activity turned outwards through external sense-organs creates the Vyavaharika condition of the Thinker; mental activity accompanied by physical exhaustion or sleep, that is to say, mental activity turned inwards into its own store of previously acquired impressions is the dream. If both the bodies, physical and mental, are exhausted or do not work, there is ordinarily the dreamless sleep. In this last condition, there being no mental activity, there is no duality or limita-

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1. अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।
   शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥
   यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
   क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

(भगवद्गीता. १३—३१. ३३)

आदित्यसान्निध्यौ लोकश्चेष्टते स्वयमेव तु ।
तथा मत्संनिधावेव समस्तं चेष्टते जगत् ॥

(सूतसंहिता. मु—ख. ५)

एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ।

(काठकोपनिषत्. ५)

tion necessary for the continued *active* existence of the two lower or shadowy Jeevatmas, and the Paramarthika Jeeva or Soul alone remains to be the One Witness of this state of dreamless sleep, as, indeed, of all other states of existence also[1]. This Witness is in no way affected by any of the three conditions of limited existence. He is called Paramarthika Jeevatma, because He is taken as appearing through such limiting conditions of being. By Himself, He is no Jeevatma at all, and the term 'Paramarthika *Jeevatma*' is, strictly speaking, meaningless, the element of Jeevatwam not being in Him. He is One and Universal[2]. Atma-Vidya enables the student to recognise the unity of the Self under all conditions and to see that all differences arise only from the nature of such conditions, and not from

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1. यः शरीरेन्द्रियादिभ्यो विभिन्नं सर्वसाक्षिणम् ।
पारमार्थिकविज्ञानं सुखात्मानं स्वयंप्रभम् ॥
परं तत्त्वं विजानाति सोऽतिवर्णाश्रमी भवेत् ।
(सूतसंहिता. मु—ख. ५)

2. अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।
यत्साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म य आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ।
(माण्डूक्योपनिषत्. बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्. ४–५–१९, ५–५–१)
पारमार्थिकजीवस्तु ब्रह्मैक्यं पारमार्थिकम् ।
प्रत्येति वीक्ष्यते नान्यद्वीक्षते त्वनृतात्मना ॥ (वाक्यसुधा. ४२)

Atma Himself[1]. It is on account of difference of condition different names are given to Him, names which indicate the nature of the condition of His manifestation. When He is considered as the ensouling life of the out-ward—turned mind, active through external senses, and as being therefore the ultimate subject or Witness of the states of external perception (mental states comprehending the vast extention of outside things), He is called Viswa. This Viswa is the externally active Thinker of the waking or Vyavaharika life[2]. When Atma is taken as the ensouling life of the inward-turned mind, active only in the varied manipulation of impressions previously gathered from outside and stored up within the mind, and as being therefore the Witness of mental cogitations (states of mind created by a process of internal lumination alone), He is called Thaijasa. This Thaijasa is the internally active Drea-

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1. एक एवात्मा मन्तव्यो जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तिषु । (अमृतबिन्दूपनिषत्)

स्त्र्यन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति ।

स्वप्ने स जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता स्वमायया कल्पितविश्वलोके ।

सुषुप्तिकाले सकले विलीने तमोऽभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति ।

(कैवल्योपनिषत्)

2. जागरितस्थानो बहिःप्रज्ञः.........स्थूलभुग्वैश्वानरः ।

(माण्डूक्योपनिषत्)

mer[1]. When Atma is considered as the guardian soul of the mind and of the physical body during the period of their rest or condition of non-activity, and as being, as He ever is, in His own state of infinite bliss and peace which, of themselves, appear in consequence of such mental non-activity, He is called Pragna. This Pragna is the Drik or seer in the state of Sushupti or dreemless sleep.[2] The Paramarthika One Soul is the Witness[3] in all the three conditions, bearing these three names, Viswa, Thaijasa and Pragna. A closer study also shows that this triple nature of Jeevatma is not only made manifest separately in the three conditions of wakefulness, dream and sound sleep, but is also perceived in the waking state itself. The Oneness of Atma in all the three conditions of being can be discerned in the Vyavaharika state itself. When Jeevatma is receiving, by way of sensations, impressions from the external world, he acts the part of Viswa. When he by closing his eyes or otherwise mentally re-

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1. स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः......प्रविविक्तभुक्तैजसः ।

(माण्डूक्योपनिषत्)

2. सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञः । एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्यामी । (माण्डूक्योपनिषत्)

3. स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति ।

य एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति । (काठकोपनिषत्. ४—५)

views his previous sense-impressions, he is Thaijasa for the time being. When he, after some practice, succeeds in keeping his mind vacant, having neither sense-impressions nor internal cogitations, and remains in the state of indifference or Udasinasthithih he is himself Pragna. He is *only one*, but is known by different names when he is considered as being under different conditions[1]. He, in reality, is neither Viswa, nor Thaijasa, nor Pragna. Though he is the ultimate Witness in all the three, he is quite independent of the conditions of the three. His own is said to be the Fourth or Thuriya state, that is to say, a state beyond all such limited conditions[2]. These conditions appear

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1. बहिःप्रज्ञो विभुर्विश्वो ह्यन्तःप्रज्ञस्तु तैजसः ।
घनप्रज्ञस्तथा प्राज्ञ एक एव त्रिधा स्मृतः ॥

(मा—उप—गौड—का)

2. नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिः प्रज्ञं नोभयतः प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञं... एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ।

(माण्डूक्योपनिषत्)

अद्वैतः सर्वभूतानां देवस्तुर्यो विभुः स्मृतः ।

(मा-उप. गौ—का.)

योऽवस्थात्रयनिर्मुक्तमवस्थासाक्षिणं सदा ।
महादेवं विजानाति सोऽतिवर्णाश्रमी भवेत् ॥ (सूतसंहिता. मु—खं)

जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्त्यादिं प्रपञ्चं यत्प्रकाशते ।
तद्ब्रह्माहमिति ज्ञात्वा सर्वबन्धैः प्रमुच्यते ॥

to be true only so long as their creator, Avidya, seems to subsist.

Voluntary withdrawal of life from mental body.

9. Mental body is created by and in Avidya for its own active manifestation. In the state of deep-sleep, owing to the condition of exhaustion of the mental body, Avidya itself appears to have retired, but this retirement is not real, but is only temporary and partial. Even this seeming retirement leads to the actual experience of infinite bliss and peace owing to the absence of mental activity. This retirement of Avidya, instead of being made to depend upon the condition of exhaustion of the bodies, is voluntarily brought about by the knower of Atma even during the waking state by rendering the 'mind' inactive as in deep-sleep[1]. This removal of activity is

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त्रिषु धामसु यद्भोज्यं भोक्ता भोगश्च यद्भवेत् ।
तेभ्यो विलक्षणः साक्षी चिन्मात्रोऽहं सदा शिवः ॥ (कैवल्योपनिषत्)

1. सुषुप्तवज्जाग्रति यो न पश्यति
द्वयं तु पश्यन्नपि चाद्वयत्वतः ।
तथा च कुर्वन्नपि निष्क्रियश्च यः
स आत्मविन्नान्य इतीह निश्चयः ॥

(उपदेशसहस्री–१०–१३)

more or less completely effected in the states of Samadhi[1] or Spiritual trance and Udasinasthithi, the states of quietude and indifference, by the Soul by withdrawing from the mental body all life which is in reality His own. Avidya, whenever it brings about activity, does so only by virtue of the life inherent in the Soul. If that life is withdrawn from the mental body by the Soul Himself, Avidya becomes altogether powerless, and becomes itself merged in Him. This happens soon in the case of the one who realises that he, in reality, is the Paramarthika Jeeva, the Real Soul, that the thinker, the dreamer and the sleeper are only his own shadows, that Avidya, the creator of the grand panorama of the universe, has no existence apart from himself, and that all limitations and the consequent miseries and degradations which make up the facts and the events of the Universe are all due to himself, because he lends his own life-spirit to Avidya which, in consequence, assumes the shape of 'active mind' and, as if by a kind of magic touch, creates a host of multiplicity of phenomena in the one Noumenon, the Self.

10. Here, some reader perhaps may ask what real happiness can there be if the 'mind', through which

1. अथ समाधिः । जीवात्मपरमात्मैक्यावस्था त्रिपुटिरहिता परमानन्दस्वरूपा शुद्धचैतन्यात्मिका भवति । (शांडिल्योपनिषत्)

Happiness is of the Self.

alone is happiness ordinarily felt, is rendered absolutely inactive. But we have to realise that real bliss and peace are not in the 'mind', nor are they created by it. They belong to the ultimate Noumenal Self in us. Whenever there is any feeling of happiness, by whatever cause it may be produced, there is, for the time being, an unfolding of the nature of the Self. The limited happiness of Jeevas is but, so to say, an infinitesimal part of the Supreme Happiness of the Absolute Self[1]. The Self, in the ordinary man, appears as if covered by a thick coating of Not-Self or the Phenomenal. This coating is formed of physical and mental natures. The ordinary man identifying himself with his bodies, physical and mental, thinks that happiness is possible only through such bodies and by means of objects that can favourably affect such bodies. So, in order to have happiness, he has recourse to more of not-Self, and, by his arranging to have this additional not-Self poured down on himself with considerable force, his original coating gives way to some extent and the underlying Self is revealed for a moment, just in the same way as water poured down with force into a shallow vessel, already containing water, reveals the bottom of the vessel for an instant. Such revelation of the Self implies "feel-

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1. एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति ।

(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् ४)

ing of happiness." But, the man unfortunately does not know that, by so attempting to secure happiness through, and by putting on more of, not-Self, he makes his limiting coating or encasement thicker still and renders future happiness more difficult to be secured. The additional pouring of water may no doubt expose to view the bottom of the vessel for a moment, but the immediate result is that the bottom becomes at once covered by a greater volume of water over it. The man who will have the bottom permanently in his view should not pour more of water into the vessel, but should completely empty it of all water. The student, who earnestly wants to have eternal happiness, should first understand that he is in reality the Inner Witness, the Self, Whose very nature is infinite bliss, and then try to remove from himself, that is to say, to rise above, all the limiting and hiding encasements, physical and mental.[1] It is these encasements, which he has himself brought into existence, like the silk-worm that weaves its own bondage, that prevent the full realisation of the inherent bliss. These encasements however can affect such realisation only when the attempt to realise is made

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1. स एवं विद्वानस्माच्छरीरभेदादूर्ध्व उत्क्रम्यामुष्मिन् स्वर्गे लोके सर्वान्कामानाप्त्वाऽमृतः समभवत् । (ऐतरेयोपनिषत् ४)

पाशबद्धस्तथा जीवः पाशमुक्तस्तदा शिवः (स्कन्दोपनिषत्)

through them. The real Jeeva in man is inside, within the physical and the mental encasements, so to say, and he can directly realise his true Inner Glory[1] by introspection into his own nature. If, instead of doing so, he takes the wrong course of getting at his own inherent bliss through the medium of the mind and other external encasements, difficulties stand in the way, and happiness, when secured, looks small and meagre, because of its being realised through mediums characterised by limitation. The mind is alwayslimited, and happiness secured through it is also limited. Such happiness is limited not only in intensity, but also in duration. Happiness had through the mind is of three kinds, because of the Gunas of the mind:—Satwic happiness begins in suffering and ends in enjoyment; Rajasic happiness begins in enjoyment and ends in suffering; and Tamasic happiness is true happiness neither in the beginning nor in the end, and it is characterised by dullness and slovenliness, and ignorance and illusion[2]. Real unqualified happiness, which is beyond the three Gunas or qualities, and which subsists

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1. जीवोदेवस्सदाशिवः (स्कन्दोपनिषत्)

2. यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥
विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
[प]रिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥

without time-limit, is above the reach of the mind. This supreme happiness or Bliss-proper cannot be realised so long as attempt is made to secure it through the mind, and so long as attachment to happiness secured through the mind continues. The one chief means of securing higher happiness is to give up or renounce the lower one. Although the happiness that is so renounced is no doubt happiness, however low and limited, still, even ordinary prudence demands such renunciation, because it leads to a higher state of bliss. The renunciation again of this higher happiness will again lead to a state of bliss superior still more, and so on. This fact is mentioned in detail in the Sacred Sruti.[1] The highest and truest happiness which is of the Self alone can be reached only when everything that is securable through not-Self is completely renounced. This happiness, which is infinite, is part of our essential nature. Being the Self as we are, and having infinite Bliss in ourselves, the truth is clear that, if we remain ourselves alone, we remain ever in Bliss.[2] The ex-

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यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

(भगवद्गीता. १८–३७–३९)

1. (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्—अष्टमोऽनुवाकः)

2. यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति भूमैव सुखं.........यत्र नान्यत्पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति स भूमाऽथ यत्रान्यत्पश्य·

pression "attainment of Absolute Bliss" means only "being as we are ever in Bliss". Our present 'I', the Thinker of the Vyavaharika state, knows not this Bliss, because he does not look within himself for happiness, but sends all his force outwards through the mind to search for happiness abroad. This means, he renders active his encasements, physical and mental, and in keeping up this activity all his time and energy are wasted. The Great Ones actually wonder how much of enormous trouble the man of the world takes for getting some shadowy bits of happiness. They tell us plainly that the more we trouble ourselves about happiness the less we get in actuality. All attempts, activities and troubles mean the energising of the physical and the mental bodies by the Jeeva and the searching for happiness through such bodies.

त्यन्यच्छृणोत्यन्यद्विजानाति तदल्पं यो वै भूमा तदमृतमथ यदल्पं तन्मर्त्यं स भगवः कस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठित इति स्वे महिम्नि ।

(छान्दोग्योपनिषत्—७—२३—२४)

"एतत्सत्यं ब्रह्मपुरमस्मिन्कामाः समाहिताः"
अतोऽस्मिन्पुण्डरीकोपलक्षिते ब्रह्मपुरे सर्वे कामाः
ये बहिर्भवद्भिः प्रार्थ्यन्ते तेऽस्मिन्नेव स्वात्मनि समाहिताः ।
अतस्तत्प्राप्त्युपायमेवानुतिष्ठत बाह्यविषयतृष्णां
त्यजतेत्यभिप्रायः । एष आत्मा भवतां स्वरूपम् ।

(छान्दोपनिषत्–श्रीशं–भा.८.१)

Real happiness is in the Inmost Self. The search, however, is usually all outside. The Thinker, instead of looking within himself, being where he is, travels far and wide in quest of happiness in vain.

The Great Teaching.

11. The Great Ones, ever having pity and love for him, look for an opportunity to help him, and when, the time arrives and the Thinker becomes qualified to receive instructions in spiritual matters, teach and slowly guide him by saying:—

...विद्वान्रमते निर्ममो निरहं सुखी ।
कामान्निष्कामरूपी सन् चरत्येकचरो मुनिः ।
स्वात्मनैव सदा तुष्टः स्वयं सर्वात्मना स्थितः ।

(आत्मोपनिषत् ।

अहमेव सुखं नान्यदन्यच्चेन्नैव तत्सुखम् ।

(वराहोपनिषत्)

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥

(भगवद्गीता २—५५)

तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषाम् ।

(काठकोपनिषत् ५)

आत्मक्रीड आत्मरतिः क्रियावानेष ब्रह्मविदां वरिष्ठः ।

(मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३)

आत्मन्येव स्थितो यस्तु स याति परमां गतिम् ।

(नारदपरिव्राजकोपनिषत्)

"O, Thinker, your accustomed guide, the 'mind', cannot help you in the search for eternal happiness. The mind, being generally outward-faced, cannot reach it, and does not even know where it is. Do not therefore trouble your mind, but give it rest. When the mind is at rest, you are no more the Thinker, but the Inner Witness who has been witnessing the appearance and the disappearance of mental states. You will then realise that no limitations actually belong to you, but that they belong to your appearance as Thinker under mind-limitations. You are now making serious attempts and taking immense trouble to secure happiness by means of mental activity, sometimes followed by its consequence, physical activity also. The result however is poor, and naturally it ought to be so. Your activity drags you away from the real fountain-head of infinite bliss, your Self, and the worse pity of it is that you mistake this activity as the real cause of happiness. Instead of being your help, it is an actual hindrance to your realising happiness. It not only keeps you away from happiness, but it also gives you positive pain, worry and trouble. Happiness is your own property. The mind is only your hanger-on. The mind depends upon your life for its existence, and you are not depending on it for yours which is ever-blissful. But, you think that you have lost the key of your treasure-house of happiness, and you ask your hanger-on, the mind,

to find out the key for you. As a matter of fact it cannot find it out, because it knows not where to find it out. Still, you have empowered it to make the search for you. You place yourself under obligations to it. The mind at once arrogates to itself the power to discover the key, and promises to do so. You supply it with funds for use in the course of the search, by lending to it your very life. Nay, more than this, you yourself follow it, encourage it, procure all sorts of conveniences for it, and, in fact, subject yourself to a good deal of trouble on its account, all this, because it has promised to do for you what is not possible for it to do. Then comes the stage of disappointments. You see that the mind does not actually give you any real clue of bliss proper. You begin to withdraw your confidence from it. More experiences in the same line teach you that it is altogether impossible to reach the desired goal with the aid of the mind. When your hanger-on sees that you are beginning to understand its incapacity to achieve the end in view, it slowly and by degrees hides its head from you, and leaves you alone to mournfully regret your having placed yourself under its guidance without knowing its capacities properly. Just at this stage you long for a proper guide who can directly take you to the very spot where the key is kept. Then appears before you the Holy Guru, the One Who knows where the key is, and He at once

reveals the truth by saying:— 'My dear child, do not be vexed. Know yourself, and you will pass beyond all sorrow[1]. The key that you want is not outside yourself. Place your hand at the heart, and you feel the presence of the longed-for key just there, inside the outer covering. It has always been there, and you unfortunately forgot about it on account of Avidya. You placed yourself unnecessarily under the guidance of the poor weakling, the mind. It dragged you away and put you to a lot of inconvenience and trouble. The key is here and now. Take it, and go back to your own abode. Do not place yourself under the guidance of the mind any more. It is altogether incapable of any real help to you. In fact, it acts as a clog and causes hindrance to you in a number of ways. I do not ask you to have it dismissed summarily or put out of existence at once. Only, do not any more delegate to it any of your inherent life-powers. It is not competent to wield such powers properly. Always keep it at a distance. Do not freely mingle with it, nor give it any opportunity to influence you in any manner possible. Then, you will see that the mind, being kept, as it is, in its own subordinate position, no longer troubles you with its impertinent

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1. मा शोचीरात्मविज्ञानी शोकस्यान्तं गमिष्यसि ।

(शाण्डिल्योपनिषत्)

[illegible]rusiveness, and you may now compel it to be of service to you by leading you to your abode back again from where it had taken you by its misleading and mischievous activities. The mind has, no doubt, to be active for taking you back also. But this activity, known as *Introspection*, is helpful, unlike the outward-turned activity by which you were abducted away from your home. The mental process of introspection is the means of liberation from evil[1]. Just when you are about to actually enter into your home, mind stops at the threshold, for it has no admittance inside where nothing finite can be, and the mind is finite. While just at the threshold, you may then dispense with the mind altogether, unless you choose to retain it for the helping of your wandering brothers who are in need of a proper guide to take them back to the same Abode."

By teachings like the above the Soul gets rid of all the troubles arising from mental activities, and the inherent, ever existing, Eternal Peace and Bliss (without space or time-limit) of the Self is realised for ever-more. It is non-active rest in oneself that reveals this highest state of being, the lofty state of the

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1. आवृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ।
मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यम् । (काठकोपनिषत् ४.)
मनो युक्तान्तर्दृष्टिस्तारकप्रकाशाय भवति ।

(मण्डलब्राह्मणोपानिषत्)

Paramarthika Soul, the Witness or Atma[1]. Every Jeeva, high or low in the scale of evolution, is hunting after happiness, and turns away from evil, because of this Supreme Truth that the Inner Real Self is in His own nature ever blissful and absolutely free from bondage or limitation which is the prime root of evil. The real nature of one's own Inner Self can therefore be realised only by him who is calm and self-centred, without being ruffled into manifold activities caused by the loose, restless mind and its dependants, the runaway senses[2]. The proper training of the student of Atma-

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1. चित्ते चलति संसारो निश्चलं मोक्ष उच्यते ।
तस्माच्चित्तं स्थिरीकुर्यात्प्रज्ञया परया परे ।
चित्तं कारणमर्थानां तस्मिन्सति जगत्त्रयम् ।
मनसा मन आलोक्य वृत्तिशून्यं यदा भवेत् ।
ततः परं परं ब्रह्म दृश्यते च सुदुर्लभम् ।
(योगशिखोपनिषत्)

दिग्देशकालाद्यनपेक्ष्य सर्वगं
शीतादिहृन्नित्यसुखं निरञ्जनम् ।
यः स्वात्मतीर्थं भजते विनिष्क्रियः
स सर्ववित्सर्वगतोऽमृतो भवेत् ॥ (आत्मबोधः ६८)

स्वात्मन्यवस्थानं मोक्षम् । (केनोपनिषत्–श्रीशं–भा २)

2. यस्त्वविज्ञानवान्भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथेः ॥

Vidya is therefore in the direction of bringing about the cessation of all mental activities[1] and by enabling him to realise his oneness with the Ultimate Witness, the Self, in him. Cessation of mental activity cannot be brought about at once, but it becomes possible by well-directed, steady practice in concentration, of which more will be said in the discourse on 'Image-worship'.

A doubt.

12. It has been stated above that in the state of dreamless sleep or Sushupti there is actual experience of infinite bliss and peace. It may perhaps be rightly asked whether the state of the Jeeva in dreamless sleep is not one of thorough annihilation, at least, a state of existence dull, dark and characterised by ignorance. If what is meant by 'Peace and Bliss' of the state of liberation be nothing but an experience similar to that in dreamless sleep, then Mukti or liberation, which is the

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यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः ॥

(काठकोपनिषत्. ३)

1. आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ।
यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ।

(भगवद्गीता ६-२५-२६)

aim of Atma-Vidya, can mean only 'Empty Nothingness'. The fact, however, is this:—In the state of dreamless sleep there is, no doubt, the realisation of infinite peace and bliss, but the consciousness of such realisation is thoroughly darkened by the overhanging, blinding and limiting Avidya though then inactive. Although in the state of dreamless sleep and also in the state of liberation there is absolute freedom from the evils of duality, from the troubles and worries of waking or dream life, yet the latter state, that is to say, the state of the Real Self Who is in the Fourth State, as it were, is altogether different and is one of infinite blissful consciousness, quite beyond the darkness of Sushuptaic ignorance[1]. At the end of dreamless sleep, when Avidya begins to display its power of active

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1. सुषुप्तिसमाध्योर्मनोलयाविशेषेऽपि महदस्त्युभयोर्भेदः, तमसि लीनत्वान्मुक्तिहेतुत्वाभावाच्च । समाधौ मृदिततमोविकारस्य तदाकाराकारिताखण्डात्मकसाक्षिचैतन्ये प्रपञ्चलयस्सम्पद्यते ।

(मण्डलब्राह्मणोपनिषत्)

कार्यकारणबद्धौ ताविष्येते विश्वतैजसौ ।
प्राज्ञः कारणबद्धस्तु द्वौ तौ तुर्ये न सिध्यतः ॥

नात्मानं न परञ्चैव न सत्यं नापि चानृतम् ।
प्राज्ञः किञ्चन संवेत्ति तुर्यं तत्सर्वदृक्सदा ॥

द्वैतस्याग्रहणं तुल्यमुभयोः प्राज्ञतुर्ययोः ।
बीजनिद्रायुतः प्राज्ञः सा च तुर्ये न विद्यते ॥

manifestation, the Sushuptaic freedom from the evils of duality vanishes, and the sleeper comes back to his workhouse in the prison. But, so long as the state of sleep, Sushupti, continues, the co-existence of Avidya does not in the least detract from the peaceful nature of the Sushuptaic experience. Generally, we, the Thinkers of the waking life, do not comprehend the real nature of the state of Sushupti exactly as it is, or remember completely our own experience during deep sleep; and it is indeed no wonder that we are not able to remember better, because, the Jeevatma that tries to remember in the waking state is not the Jeevatma that was the experiencer in deep sleep. Viswa and Thaijasa, who are, *as such*, different from Pragna, cannot have vividly before them the real state of the latter, in the same way as the Dreamer, though having some slight remembrance of the experiences of the waking Thinker, is not able to remember all the events and all the corrective experiences of the waking state. The Dreamer, being only a partial represen-

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किञ्च,

यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः ।
अनिङ्गनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं ब्रह्म तत्तदा ॥

(मा. उप. गौड. का)

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म । विज्ञानमानन्दं ब्रह्म । विज्ञानघन एव ।

(इत्यादिश्रुतयश्च)

tative of the Thinker, does not exactly know the nature of the state of the Thinker. So, the Thinker, our present 'I', does not fully understand the nature of the state of the Jeeva in dreamless sleep. Pragna, being the actual experiencer in that state, can alone realise what its nature is. But, in as much as even the condition of Pragna is not free from Avidya, the maker of illusion, it can only be the Real Paramarthika Soul, Who is the Ultimate Witness in all the three conditions, and whom Avidya cannot approach against His will, that can realise fully that supreme absolute bliss and peace of which the Sushuptaic bliss and peace are themselves imperfect copies. We cannot have any adequate conception of such a happy state of the Real Soul, the Common Witness of the three states of being, so long as we are identifying ourselves with the Thinker of the day and the Dreamer or Sleeper of the night[1]. We can have some conception of it by carefully analysing our remembrance of the Sushupti as a quiet and happy state, untouched by the mischief of duality, the root of fear and hate, and by trying, to the best of our powers, to ascertain and understand what is taught

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1. त्रिषु धामसु यत्तुल्यं सामान्यं वेत्ति निश्चितः ।
स पूज्यः सर्वभूतानां वन्द्यश्चैव महामुनिः ॥

(मा. उप. गौड. का)

about the Supreme State of Atma in Agama, the Sacred Words of Wisdom.

A similar doubt.

13. It may also be asked:—If, as a matter of fact, the supreme state of blissful consciousness is our own in reality, how is it we do not possess now that supreme consciousness and happiness? Is it possible that we can be ignorant or deprived of our very nature? How can it be said that Nidra and Avidya, emanating from Atma Himself, have managed to delude Him? The answer is simple. Atma cannot be, and has never been, deluded. When we say 'we are deluded', by the term 'we' is meant not Atma at all but His reflection, the Thinker. The Thinker or Vyavaharika Jeevatma, with whom alone, as remarked above, we are identifying ourselves now, is, no doubt, deluded by Avidya, in the same manner as the Dreamer is deluded in Nidra or sleep. In the case of the Dreamer, the corrective experiences of the waking state, as indicated above, are not properly remembered, and the Dreamer finds it difficult to get out of dream-illusion. In the same way, in our present or Vyavaharika condition we are deluded by Avidya.

Self like an actor on the stage.

14. When, by the rise of knowledge of the Self, acquired through Agama in the beginning, and verified later on by Swanubhava or actual realisation, Avidya is about to be removed, we, as the real Atma, not

as mere Thinkers as we are now, will then recognise in consciousness, in such a happy stage, that the apparent arrival at that stage, the existence of the so-called lower stages, and the manifold experiences relating to them had under the influence of the deluding Avidya are all unreal[1], and are but the playful manifestations of the One Supreme Self under the cloak of a voluntary limitation created in and by Himself. The Self may perhaps be compared to an amateur actor on the stage appearing under a self-chosen guise. (The comparison, be it remembered, holds good only to a limited extent.) For the time being, the actor identifies himself with the character assumed, and acts his part accordingly. So long as he does not care to bring within his recollection his own true nature, he is found acting out his part, consistently with the form assumed. If, while so acting, he becomes conscious of his own true state of being, the striking contrast between the inner reality and the outer appearance becomes at once clear. If we, Jeevas, would only try to raise ourselves up to that lofty state of consciousness[2] wherein we may

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1. न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिर्न बद्धो न च साधकः ।
न मुमुक्षुर्न वै मुक्त इत्येषा परमार्थता ।
(अमृतबिन्दूपनिषत्)

2. भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥
(मुण्डकोपनिषत् २)

realise our inner and truer Self, we shall at once recognise the unreality of all forms and be, as ever, the same Sat-Chit-Ananda-Swarupi, the One Self without a second.

As above, so below.

15. According to the extent of limitation which seems to be imposed on the lower stages of existence of Jeevatma, the Sat-Chit-Ananda state of the Supreme appears also to be proportionately limited. The Noumenal or Sat aspect of the Real Self appears as if limited within the narrow individuality of the dreamer and the thinker. The supreme consciousness or Chit shows itself forth as the meagre intellectuality of the thinking Jeeva. The absolute bliss or Ananda of the Most High is reflected in the shape of worldly happiness which depends, for its continued existence, on intermittent suffering. Thus, we see that our sense of existence, and our intellectual and emotional natures are not altogether peculiar to our lower conditions of existence. All these are but the meagre representations of the Spiritual Verities of our Real Self. We can have down below here nothing which is not a copy of what exists above[1]. As our dream experiences are generally but the copy of our waking experiences, twisted and recombined by the medium Nidra, so are all the

1 यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह ।

(काठकोपनिषत ४)

experiences of the Thinker but the twisted representation of the Supreme State of Sat-Chit-Ananda of the Real Self, the Absolute State of blissful consciousness and peace eternal, the State which is realised at the end of Gnana Marga, the Path of Knowledge, the Path that can be trodden by the willing student gifted with faith enough to follow the Divine Teacher of Atma-Vidya.[1]

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1. आचार्यवान्पुरुषो वेद ।
आचार्याद्धैव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठां प्रापत् ।
(छान्दोग्योपनिषत् ४. ९. ३.)

ब्रह्म चैवमाचार्योपदेशपरम्परयैवाधिगन्तव्यं न तर्कतः ।
(केनोपनिषत्. श्रीशं. भा. १)

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् (मुण्डकोपनिषत् १)
आचार्यशास्त्रमार्गेण प्रविश्याशु स्थिरो भव । (वराहोपनिषत्)
तद्दर्शनं सदाचार्यमूलम् । (अद्वयतारकोपनिषत्)
गुरुवाक्यसमाभाने ब्रह्मज्ञानं प्रकाशते ।
कर्णधारं गुरुं प्राप्य तद्वाक्यं प्लववद्दृढम् ॥ (योगशिखोपनिषत्)

DISCOURSE III.

The Origin of Illusion

OR

Maya.

(मायामात्रं जगत्कृत्स्नम्–दर्श–उप)

Introduction.

1. In the course of the study of the nature of Jeevatma or Individual Soul it was pointed out that the Self in the individual is none else than the One Universal Self, and that the seeming individuality of Jeevatma is due to Avidya, an aspect of the Power of the Universal Self, that is the root of separation and differentiation. In other words, in the One Unlimited Absolute Self, Who is the ultimate Noumenon, is created, as it were, a vast multiplicity of individual Souls who are not in essence different from the One Self[1], but who, notwithstanding their real unlimited nature, seem to work under limitations arising out of Avidya which is not outside the Self, such limitations being the cause of

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1. एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति ।

(काठकोपनिषत् . ५)

phenomenal existence by virtue of the separation of 'subject' and 'object.' To state more briefly, the Phenomenal arises out of the Noumenal, the limited out of the unlimited, the many out of the One. On enquiry, we are told that 'Maya' it is that makes all this possible[1], and that Avidya is but an aspect of Maya. We shall now consider what 'Maya' really is, and how She brings forth the manifoldness of the universe through Avidya, an aspect of Herself. 'Maya' being known, everything is known, as She is the Ultimate Cause of manifestation, as the Great Ones say. Comprehending rightly the nature of 'Maya' the Mother of the Phenomenal, realisation of the Self, the Ultimate Noumenon, is soon accomplished. The final goal of all knowledge is the realisation of absolute freedom from evil and of supreme bliss, that is to say, the escape out of the troubles of duality and separation, and the realisation of the absolute Unity of the Self. There is in fact none else than the Infinite Atma who is, in his Sat-aspect, the Ultimate Reality in all, in His Chit-aspect, the One persistent Witness of all states of consciousness, and, in his Ananda-aspect, the unfailing fountain-head of absolute bliss. All else is unreal, being, as it is said, the result of 'Maya.'

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1. मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतमद्वैतं परमार्थतः ।
मायया भिद्यते ह्येतन्नान्यथाऽजं कथञ्चन ।
(मा—उप. गौड—का)

2. What is Maya then? What is really not is 'Maya' (*ya-ma-sa-maya*). 'Maya' thus means 'unreality.'

Nature of Maya stated.

Nevertheless, Maya is said to be the cause of the perceived universe. If Maya is absolute unreality, She cannot be the cause of anything. So, the term 'unreality' of 'Maya' must have a peculiar significance, and let us try to know what it is. From Agama it is ascertained that Maya is Sakti or Power of the Self[1]; She has no existence apart from the Self; She manifests Herself in Him, and disappears in Him; Her results, the modes of phenomenal existence, are transitory, having no sustained existence, and are ever changing. Such is the description of Maya. In order that we may understand it rightly, we will do well to begin with a study of 'Man,' who is the universe in miniature.

3. Let us take man. Let it be supposed that his hand moves to take hold of an enjoyable object. This

Power in Man.

motion of the hand is the result of the motor currents sent to the muscles of the limb from certain nervous centres which are affected by the rise of a mental state called 'volition' or 'will.' This 'will' to move arises

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1. ते ध्यानयोगानुगता अपश्यन् देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैर्निगूढां ।

(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्)

from and follows another mental state, namely, 'desire' to move, and this 'desire' itself arises as a result of a presentation in consciousness of the desired object. I shall call this presentation in consciousness together with the subsequent processes of intellection, if any, by the name 'knowledge.' Behind this knowledge there is the Reality in man, the Self, Who is the ultimate source in and from Whom arises this knowledge. He is in fact the Witness of the rise and fall of knowledge, desire and will. Though these mental states ultimately originate from Him, He is different from them. He is the witnessing 'Subject' (*Drik*) and these form His witnessed 'Objects' (*Drisyani*).[1] These mental states, though different from the Witness Who is the Self, arise in Him because of a Power existing in Him, namely the Power to know, to desire and to will. Knowledge, desire and will are occasional manifestations of this Power in Him. This Power to know, to desire and to will is ever in the Witness-Self, whether or not there is actual knowing, desiring or willing. Actual knowledge, desire and will appear and disappear in the Self

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1. बोधस्तु जायते विनश्यति च ।
सर्वप्रत्ययदर्शित्वे चोपजननापायवर्जितदृक्स्वरूपतानित्यत्वं विशुद्धस्वरूपत्वमात्मत्वं ।
सर्वे प्रत्यया विषयीभवन्ति यस्य स आत्मा ।
(केनोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा. २)

by virtue of this triple power. The power of knowledge (*Gnanasakti*) has to be distinguished from knowledge (*Gnanam*), the power of desire (*Ichchhasakti*) from desire (*Ichchha*), and the power of will (*Kriyasakti*) from will (*Kriya*). [It is to be noted that the term 'Kriya' is ordinarily used to mean 'Action.' The term 'action' itself denotes directly the 'will' that results in voluntary activity. The responsibility for all action is because of the 'will' that is the immediate cause of such activity. Hence the term 'Kriya' is properly used to denote 'the will'.] The power in the Self is only one, and is indivisible from Him. It is only in its manifestation its triple-sidedness is exhibited.

Nature of Power.

4. In trying to ascertain the exact nature of this Power in the Self, let us take for example, the Power of Will by itself, as distinguished from actual will. Is the power real or unreal? The nature of the answer depends upon the answerer. Broadly speaking, three answers are possible :—

(1) The ordinary ignorant man identifies the power of will with motion actually perceived. He is not able to appreciate the difference between the power of will and actual volition and action. His observation is only from the side of external appearance. He cannot properly examine the real nature and the source of 'activity'. He sees motion actually taking place

and he believes that what is called 'Power to will', it being in his view identical with volition and action, is real or Sat.

(2) The thinking student or seeker of knowledge examines volition and action a little more deeply, and finds that they are real only for a time. He sees they are subject to change and they disappear also. He learns that the truly real ought to be real for all times and under all conditions. The reality in a gold ring is only gold and not its form as ring which is liable to change. What is absolutely real should have been in existence in the beginningless past, should be in existence in the present, and should continue to be so in the eternal future. "Reality" means reality during the three periods of time[1]. What is not real at all times is unreal or Anitya. So, the Power of Will, being identified with changing will or volition resulting in perceived motion, is, in the opinion of the student, not real *(na sat)*. On further research, the student discovers the subtle distinction between the *Power of Will* and the *Will* itself. Still, he finds that, apart from actual will, the Power by itself is not known at all. In this way, his view about the unreal nature of the Power is confirmed. But, he soon begins to argue that, if the Power were unreal, no perceived results can come out of it, whatever may be the nature of the results, whether perma-

1. त्रिकालाबाध्यं सत्यं त्रिकालानुस्यूतं सत्यं । (सर्वसारोपनिषत्)

nent or otherwise. Then he takes it that the Power ought to be real also (*Sat*). But, he soon finds that it cannot be both real and unreal (*na sadasat*). Then, he vaguely concludes that the Power possesses, in fact, a characteristic which cannot be accurately described in words, hence Anirvachaniya. Further careful enquiries enable the student to dimly discern the existence of the Self in man, the Ultimate Witness[1], Who sees the rise and fall of volition and other mental states within Himself; sees, not through any organ of sense, but by direct realisation in consciousness inherent in Him. The student then arrives at the final conclusion that the Power of Will in man is a bridge, as it were, between the Witness and volition and is therefore different from both.

(3) To the wise who sees from the standpoint of view of the Self or Witness in man, the Power of Will has no existence independent of the Witness, and its apparent reality is only by virtue of the Reality of the Self. It has no separate existence for itself. The only Reality subsisting at all times, Sat, is the Self. His Power, when considered apart from Him, is absolutely unreal or Asat, but when considered with Him is co-existent or one with Him. It is infinite as He is, and it is only its manifestation as volition that is characterised by limitation or finiteness. When the

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1. ...बुद्ध्यादीनां हि सर्वदा साक्ष्यहं... । (सर्वसारोपनिषत्)

Will to move the hand becomes manifest, infinite possibilities of other modes of volition are locked up, as it were, in the Power of Will. The really unlimited Power of Will exhibits limitation in its resultant selected state of volition, the rest of the possibilities being, for the present, left in the back-ground. As is the Power of Will, so are the Power of Knowledge and the Power of Desire also understood differently.

Nature of Maya—three views.

5. As is Power in man, so in the universe is Maya or Infinite Sakti or Power of the Universal Self considered in three ways:—

(1) To the *worldly-minded or outer-attentioned*, Maya, being considered as identical with the perceived Universe, is *real.*

(2) To the *Student of Atma-Vidya*, Maya is neither real nor unreal nor both and is incapable of description by words[1].

(3) To the *Saint*, Brahmagnani or Jeevan-Mukta, Maya, as apart from the Self or Atma, is *absolutely unreal*[2].

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1. न सती नासती न सदसत्यनिर्वाच्या । (सर्वसारोपनिषत्)

2. सकारणस्य संसारस्यात्यन्तमेवोच्छेदः प्रदर्शितो भवति ।
(ईशावास्योपनिषत्. श्रीशं. भा.)

सा च माया न विद्यते (मा. उप. गौड. का.)

मायाकार्यादिकं नास्ति माया नास्ति भयं न हि ।
(तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्)

6. Those who enquire are in the second stage, the stage of the student. To them Maya is the bridge, as it were, between the Unmanifest Absolute Self, Para-Brahma, and the Manifest Universe, and She is therefore different from both.

The universe arises from Maya whose qualities are Tamas, Rajas and Satwam.

She has her existence in the former, and is the cause of the latter. As in Man, Maya-Sakti in the universe, although unlimited in Herself, is the ultimate cause of motion under limitation, and therefore of the universe itself which has its existence in motion or vibration, by successive manifestations of Herself as Gnana-Sakti, Ichchha-Sakti and Kriya-Sakti. Of these manifestations some details will be mentioned in the last discourse. Maya, being the cause of limited manifestation as the universe, is also the cause of differentiation by virtue of three qualities of limitation or modes of motion or activity orginating from Her, which correspond to the three aspects of the Infinite Self, Sat, Chit and Ananda. This correspondence is because of Maya being inseparable from the Absolute Self. The triple aspect of the Self is reflected through Maya as the triplicity of Her Gunas or qualities. These qualities are *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Satwam*, which have reference respectively to *dark ignorance or dullness and comparative inactivity*, *illusive light or perversion and dividing or disharmonious activity*, and *pure light or knowledge and harmonious activity*. These

qualities are discerned, not in the Unmanifested Maya-Sakti (the unrevealed Power in the Spirit) but in Her emanation as Manifested Nature characterised by diverse differentiation in the modes of motion. Pure Maya, as Infinite Power, is one with the Infinite Self, and is incapable of division or analysis, and the ordinary expression 'Triplicity of Maya' can have no direct reference to Her. She knows no differentiation, and in Her is preserved the equilibrium[1] of gunas or qualities, which is the characteristic of the state of non-manifestation. The qualities become manifest, and their very existence is known, only when this equilibrium is disturbed by one of the three qualities putting itself forth more prominently than the other two. The triplicity of the qualities is in fact indivisible, and the nature of any particular quality is determined by finding out which of the characteristics is in the ascendant, whether Satwic, Rajasic or Tamasic. The first appearance of qualities or Gunas is the first emergence of Maya out of Her Unmanifest state into the state of Manifestation, and is the beginning of a universe, just as in the case of a man the first appearance of a mental state, being a manifestation of the Power in him, is the beginning of voluntary motion or activity.

7. After Maya becomes manifest by the predo-

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1. तदेव मूलप्रकृतिः गुणसाम्यं । (सर्वसारोपनिषत्)

minance of one of the three qualities over the other two, She assumes different names according to the nature of the predominant quality. If the quality 'Tamas' is in the ascendant,

Names of manifested Maya—Tamasi, Avidya and Maya.

Maya is called 'Tamasi,' if 'Rajas' is predominant, She is called "Avidya", and if 'Satwam' is predominant, She is called by the name 'Maya' itself[1]. This qualified 'Maya' ought not to be mistaken for the unmanifest pure Maya or Moolaprakriti, and to avoid any confusion I shall call this 'Satwic Maya', because of the predominance of Satwa-Guna in Her.

8. The *Self exhibited through* [or putting forth as His primary *means of manifestation*, otherwise called, *Causal-body* or Karanopadhi] *Satwic Maya* is Eswara or the Supreme Logos, the First Cause of the emanation of the universe. This

Eswara, Jeeva and Matter—the three Principles of the Universe.

Karanopadhi or Causal-body is, as stated above, given the very name 'Maya', because it is the very first manifestation of the pure Maya-Sakti, and through it alone the very existence of the latter is inferred. The *Self reflected through Avidya* or Rajasic aspect of Maya is '*Jeevatma*', the Individual Soul. Avidya is

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1. सा मूलप्रकृतिः सृष्टिकाले परिपक्कजीवकर्मवशान्माया अविद्या तामसीति त्रिविधा जाता ।

(वासुदेवमननं १)

his Causal-body or Karanopadhi. As the quality 'Rajas' indicates disharmoniousness and multiplicity, Jeevatmas or individual souls appear many and different. Each Jeeva seems to have a distinct and separate life and existence. On the other hand, the quality 'Satwam' indicates harmoniousness, and unity amidst diversity characterises the nature of 'Eswara' Whose means of manifestation is Satwic-Maya. Eswara's life is the one central life that pulses through the whole of the complex universe which may be considered as his body. His causal Upadhi, Maya, is perfectly unifying and so harmless, being incompatible with separatedness which is the root of fear and hate. The Sat-Chit-Ananda aspect of the One Self is therefore unaffected by Satwic-Maya and is manifested in its fullness in Eswara, the universality of Atma being preserved in Him. Whereas in Jeevatma, as pointed out in the last discourse, Avidya being his upadhi and cause of individuality, the *Ananda* of the Universal Self is represented by faint *individual relative happiness*, the *Chit* or supreme Consciousness of His state is represented in the Individual by *mental states under disabilities*, and *Sat* or All-Pervasive Existence by *exisentce under innumerable bodily limitations.* It is to the dividing and differentiating Avidya is due the seeming existence of countless gradations in the degree of happiness, in the comprehensibility of states of concioussness and in the nature of the embodiments ensouled by

the Self. Of the three aspects Sat, Chit and Ananda, generally speaking, the Ananda aspect is least manifested in the case of the Jeeva, the two other being more prominent, on account of the circumstance that with separatedness, the result of Avidya, arise fear and hate which overshadow the element of Ananda. *The Self appearing through Tamasi* is called *Matter* (the Self is the material cause even of Matter[1]). Matter is characterised by dullness. The predominant aspect of Maya manifested in it being only Tamas or Inertia, the Sat aspect alone of the Self is prominent, the other two, Chit and Ananda, being subordinated. No activity is ordinarily perceived in it, neither individual activity as in Jeevatma, nor universal activity as in Eswara. Without doubt, 'Matter' is not altogether without activity or life. But this activity belongs not to matter itself, its causal Upadhi being Tamasi, but to the central Eswaric life of the universe. The whole universe is one huge organic body enlivened by Eswara, the One Supreme Self[2]. This organic universe comprises within itself a vast

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1. तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः। विज्ञानं चाविज्ञानं च। यदिदं किं च। तत्सत्यमित्याचक्षते।

(तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्. ब्र—व)

परमात्मनः सर्वत्रोपादानत्वात्। (आन—टी)

2. अस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत्। (श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत् ४)

number of minor organic bodies enlivened by Jeevas or individual Souls and a vast store of inorganic matter used in and for the building of organic bodies whenever required for the habitation of Jeevas, the building of the several Lokas or worlds or planes of support for Jeevas, and the preparation of objects with which to sustain the bodies of Jeevas, such as food[1].

From the above it is seen that from out of the three sides of manifested Maya, namely, Satwic Maya, Avidya and Tamasi, have emerged the three main Principles, Eswara, Jeeva and Matter respectively that together make up the universe. These three Principles are severally named in the Divine Song, Sri Bhagavat Gita, as Purushottama, Akshara and Kshara. They are also named Paramatma, Kootastha and Bhuta.[2]

9. The whole universe therefore, with all its

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1. एतेभ्यः पञ्चभूतेभ्यः ब्रह्माण्डं तदन्तश्चतुर्दशभुवनानि चतुर्विधस्थूलशरीराणि च अन्नादिभोग्यवस्तूनि च जातानि ।

(वासुदेवमननं १)

2. द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥
उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥
यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥

(भगवद्गीता. १५. १६–१८)

diversities, is the emanation from the triple-sided Maya.

The only Reality in the three Principles is the Self.

But the three qualities or Gunas of Maya can themselves never be but for the ultimate supporting Reality or Asraya of Maya, namely, the Absolute Self or Atma[1]. The gunas seem to arise and vanish in Him, in the same way as mental states arise and disappear in the Witness in man. But for the Witness in man no mental state can possibly arise. So, but for the Ultimate Self the triplicity of Maya can never appear. The Witness and the Absolute Self are the only Reality. The causal Upadhis and their modifications, as bodies and forms, in man and in the universe have alike no independent existence of their own. It is again the shadowy existence of the upadhis that creates the seeming separation between the Witness or individual Self in man and the Supreme Self in the Universe. The Unreality of the Upadhis, that is, of Maya, Avidya and Tamasi, being realised through Atma-Vidya or Knowledge of the Self, the identity of the Witness or Sakshi in man and the Universal Witness or Sarvasakshi in the universe is realised once for all, the only

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1. तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ।
(काठकोपनिषत् ५.)

यद्भासा भासतेऽर्कादि भास्यैर्यत्तु न भास्यते ।
येन सर्वमिदं भाति तद्ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ (आत्मबोधः)

Reality and common factor in Eswara, Jeeva and Matter being the Self. This realisation is possible because of the supreme truth that, as in the universe, so also are there in man himself, who is the universe in miniature, the three main Principles, Eswara, Jeeva and Matter. In his inactive, Tamasic state as in Sushupti, the matter-side of his nature is alone prominent, his physical body and life. When he is mentally active, either in the waking or the dreamy state of existence, he is sometimes Eswara, sometimes Jeeva. When his mental states are Satwic ones, he is acting the part of Eswara; and when they are Rajasic ones he acts the Jeeva. When none of the qualifying gunas of his nature is in the ascendant, that is to say, when his gunas have subsided into the state of equilibrium, he is the Self, absolute and unqualified, as in Samadhi. Matter as such is no more perceived, Jeeva and Eswara are one in the Self, their Jeevatwam and Eswaratwam being both unreal,[1] and the three qualities of Maya themselves seem to merge in the three Atmic aspects, Sat, Chit and Ananda. It is snch realisation that is referred to in the famous

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1. माया तत्कार्यविलये नेश्वरत्वं न जीवता ।
ततश्शुद्धश्चिदेवाहम् व्योमवन्निरुपाधिकम् ॥

(वराहोपनिषत्)

ईश्वरत्वञ्च जीवत्वमुपाधिद्वयकल्पितम् ।

(पञ्चदशी—प प्र—३७)

exclamation of the Jeevan-Mukta in the Vedic-Song at the close of the Thaithiriya Upanishad[1].

Meaning of the "Unreality of the Phenomenal."

10. Thus, it is found that phenomenal separated existence, which is attended by all the troubles and worries of duality, is indeed unreal, looking at it from the standpoint of view of the Ultimate Self. It is *unreal only from this stand-point*. The Upanishads and Sri Sankaracharya never meant anything more. The universe, as such, is unreal *to the Saint or Gnani, not to us.* Agama has never used the term 'unreality' in this connection in the sense in which it is sometimes used by some 'Idealistic Philosophers of the West' who say that the universe is only a bundle of sensations and has no subsisting reality. The Vedanta says that the universe can be nowhere but for the ultimate subsisting reality, the Self, Who alone is true, all else being but His manifestation[2].

(1) To the ignorant, the world as such is real.

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1. एतत्साम गायन्नास्ते । हा ३ वु हा ३ वु हा ३ वु ॥
अहमन्नमहमन्नमहमन्नम् । अहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादः ।
(तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत् भृ—व)

2. यथा सतोऽन्यद्वस्त्वन्तरं परिकल्प्य पुनस्तस्यैव प्रागुत्पत्तेः प्रध्वंसाच्चोर्ध्वमसत्वं ब्रुवते तार्किका न तथा अस्माभिः कदाचित्क्वचिदपि सतोऽन्यदभिधानमभिधेयं वा वस्तु परिकल्प्यते । सदेव तु सर्वमभिधानमभिधीयते च यदन्यबुद्धया... ।

(2) If one begins to investigate properly the world-reality will seem to disappear.

(3) At the end of the investigation comes the realisation of the oneness of the many and the unreality of the universe *as such*[1].

11. This unreality of the universe and of its source, Maya, is taught in various ways in the Vedanta by means of illustrations and similes. Comparisons must necessarily be partial and in some measure inadequate as they cannot fully illustrate the nature of the Incomparable and Infinite One Self[2]. Without

Teaching by illustrations.

विशेषाकारमात्रं तु सर्वेषां मिथ्याप्रत्ययनिमित्तमिति वाचाऽऽरम्भणं विकारो नामधेयमनृतं त्रीणि रूपाणीत्येव सत्यं । तान्यप्याकारविशेषतोऽनृतं स्वतः सन्मात्ररूपतया सत्यं ।

(छान्दोग्योपनिषत्. श्रीशं. भा. ६. २, ८. ६.)

ब्रह्ममात्रं जगदिदं । (तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्.)

1. स्वप्नमाये यथादृष्टे गन्धर्वनगरं यथा ।
तथा विश्वमिदं दृष्टं वेदान्तेषु विचक्षणैः ॥ (मा. उप. गौ. का)
नेह नानास्ति किंचन । (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् ४. ४. १९)
केवलं ब्रह्ममात्रत्वान्नास्त्यनात्मेति निश्चिनु ।
इदं प्रपञ्चं नास्त्येव नोत्पन्नं नो स्थितं क्वचित् ॥

(तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्)

2. अदृश्याय त्वगम्याय कः प्रमाणमुदाहरेत् ।

(महाभारतं, शां. प. १८२)

this circumstance being properly understood, questions in reference to such illustrations are sometimes asked in various ways, as if illustration implies identification. The chief object of Agama is to convince the student, by referring him to matters within his ordinary knowledge, of the fact that it is owing to illusory limitation and the consequent ignorance absolute freedom and bliss of the Self are not at present realised by him, and that, if he should follow in the foot-steps of the Great Ones who have crossed the trammels of bondage, he will soon realise his own true state. For instance, in the ordinary Rajjusarpa illustration, that is to say, in a case in which a man, while walking in the dark, mistakes a rope for a serpent, gets terribly afraid, runs away from the rope, and, in case his feet should have touched it, even seems to feel that he has been bitten by the imagined serpent and that his body is affected by poison, his suffering is due to the cloud of darkness around the rope, the man not being able to pierce through the darkness and to see the subsisting reality, the rope. So, in the universe, the ordinary man, without being able to pierce through the illusive, dark Avidya which shadows, as it were, the real nature of the Infinite Self, mistakes this ever blissful, absolutely free Self for the individual actor and sufferer of the world. This darkness of ignorance, Avidya, has to be removed by the light of Atma-Vidya, and the true

nature of the Self will then be realised[1]. Another illustration namely, that of the Spider is given to show the nature of Eswara and His relation to the universe[2]. The Spider weaves out an extensive web of an exquisite nature and symmetrical in its parts, all out of himself. He reserves for himself the central place in it, and from there he is able to feel the slightest touch or disturbance in any the smallest fibre in any portion of the web. Though he is in the centre, he is free to be anywhere in and outside the web which can confine in imprisonment only other insects caught in it. The Spider not only makes the web, but also preserves it in good condition, and, if it so chooses, it can also swallow up the whole web-fibre. More or less similarly is Eswara functioning in the universe. He creates the universe out of Himself, preserves it, and, at the end of a cycle, Kalpa, dissolves it unto Himself. The whole universe, as once before observed, may also be

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1. अनिश्चिता यथा रज्जुरन्धकारे विकल्पिता ।
सर्पधारादिभिर्भावैस्तद्वदात्मा विकल्पितः ॥

निश्चितायां यथा रज्ज्वां विकल्पो विनिवर्तते ।
रज्जुरेवेति चाद्वैतं तद्वदात्मविनिश्चयः ॥

(मा—उप. गौड—का)

2. यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च........................
......तथाक्षरात्संभवतीह विश्वं । (मुण्डकोपनिषत्)
ऊर्णनाभिर्यथा तन्तून् सृजते संहरत्यपि । (ब्रह्मोपनिषत्)

considered as His body. His is the central, ensouling life of the universe. Nothing can take place or be done in it which is not within His universal consciousness. Whenever there is anything seriously wrong anywhere which cannot be set right except by Himself in person He is there at once assuming a suitable form[1]. Although He assumes such embodied forms occassionally, He is not bound by the Karmic Laws of the universe[2]. He is, on the other hand, the Supreme Enforcer of such Laws. By the side of this illustration of the Spider, which indicates the nature of Eswara, an illustration of the common Silk-worm, which indicates similarly the nature of Jeeva, may also be usefully considered. The worm produces silk-fibre from itself. It weaves around itself a thick coating of fibre. When this coating has become very thick, the worm virtually finds itself confined within a wall of limitation of its own making. This wall it pierces through, and it is free again. This illustration is intended to show that, although our present circumstances and environments prove such hindrances to our progress as we are not now able to get over, they are of our own making, being the results

1. यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥
(भगवद्गीता ४—७)

2. न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति । (भगवद्गीता ४—१४)

of our free action in the past, that we must be prepared to take some trouble to undo what we have done to our own prejudice, and that, as in the case of the silk-worm which, though confined, uses the little freedom left in it for piercing through the encircling impediment around itself, we have with us freedom still to use for escaping the binding effect of our self-imposed limitation. It is our freedom of action ill-used in the past that was the cause of our present disabilities. It is again freedom of action in the present within us, not outside us, that should be used for piercing through the wall of limitation we have built around ourselves. Freedom ill-used causes bondage, and freedom well-used, though at present cabined, causes liberation.

Karma-Bhakti-Gnana-Margas.

12. The process of this piercing may indeed look very difficult, especially in the eyes of a person who is ignorant of the true nature of bondage and of the means of liberation. The cause of bondage being rightly understood, the means of liberation may appear clear. For us, Jeevas, the cause of bondage is Avidya, the Rajasic side of Maya. If we get rid of this Avidya[1], we shall be free, and for this there are two ways, rather, three:—

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1. स च नित्यत्वान्नाविद्यानिवृत्तिव्यतिरेकेणान्यसाधननिष्पाद्यः ।
(केनोपनिषत् श्रीशं. भा.)

(1) By forcibly piercing through or cutting down Avidya with a strong hand holding firmly the weapon of Wisdom, that is to say, by continuous contemplation of the Self alone, without being troubled any more by ideas of individuality; an actual sweeping away of one's own separatedness. This method is very difficult; it is the way of Sankhya-Yoga of Sri Bhagavat-Gita, or Gnana-Marga.

(2) By the milder means of rendering our Upadhi or covering of limitation finer and finer, so that it may be torn away easily when it becomes very thin. This is the process of converting the Upadhi, the thick Avidya or Rajasic Maya, into the finer Satwic Maya. This is theprocess of purification of Upadhi by the acts of Karma-Marga which leads to the clearing away of all Rajasic qualities and the cultivating of Satwic ones. (What are Rajasic and Satwic qualities respectively is stated definitely in the Divine Song, Sri Bhagavat-Gita.)

(3) This conversion of Avidya into Satwic Maya can be more easily and successfully brought about by the aspirant by gradually imbibing the qualities of the One Whose Causal-Upadhi is Satwic Maya, namely, Eswara Himself. A constant contemplation of Eswara and His qualities results in such imbibing. This is Bhakti-Marga, the path of devotion. By this method can Avidya, without much difficulty, be replaced

by Satwic Maya, and the unity of Spiritual Existence will soon be realised.

Image-and-Guru-worship.

13. By 'Realisation of the unity of the Self' in the whole universe is meant, as indicated in para 9 above, such realisation in all the Principles comprising the universe, namely, Eswara, Jeeva and Matter. In this connection, it may be mentioned that the Aryan Image-worship and Guru-worship, rightly performed under proper guidance and with true knowledge, lead the devotee to the realisation of the Self in all the three Principles. For, in such modes of worship, the Bhakta contemplates on the inner Spiritual Reality, the Self, that lies behind the coarsest veil of manifestation, Tamasi of Matter, of which the Image and the body of the Guru are composed, behind the subtlest veil of manifestation, Satwic Maya of Eswara Whose universal life is pulsing through the Image and the body of the Guru, and behind the veil of Individuality, the work of Avidya, which appears to overshadow the real Spiritual Nature of the adored Guru. By combining together Image-worship and Guru-worship, the triplicity of Maya is got over with great ease and definite certainty, and the ultimate goal of Gnana Marga (path of knowledge) is itself reached by the truly devotional (more will be said of Image-worship in a separate discourse). The devotee admires and imbibes the excellent and

elevating Satwic qualities of the Guru and of Eswara. As very often seen in this complicated universe ensouled by Eswara, so perhaps, now and then, even in the personality of the chosen Guru some Rajasic and Tamasic qualities may also be seen exhibited. But, the devotee is strictly asked to direct his attention to the Satwic qualities alone. However careful may he have been in the selection of his Guru, or however much qualified to merit the august presence before him of the holy Gurudeva, he may happen, once in a way, to discern the traces of the lower qualities even in this his ideal Teacher. But, he must remember that the Gurudeva is not only his teacher but also his examiner. As is the case with the whole manifested universe of Eswara, so also the personality of the Gurudeva has its many-sided nature. The activity of the mind of man is twofold. The currents of mental force are some of them external or out-going, and some internal or Self-reaching. The former lead to the phenomenal multiplicity of limited existence, and the latter to the noumenal unity of the Infinite Self. The former are repellant and throw out those who come under their influence, and the latter are attractive and those who are drawn by such in-going currents are passed into the very inmost Self. Although the holy Guru may sometimes exhibit Rajasic or repellant feelings, the duty of the devotee is to guard himself

carefully without being, in the least, influenced by such exhibition; and whenever there is a manifestation of the Satwic nature of the adored Guru, the devotee must be equally careful and ready to at once throw himself, in admiration, into the Satwic currents of the Guru's introspection, which lead to the realisation of the Sat-chit-ananda nature of the inmost Real Self in the holy Guru. The Gurudeva may even sometimes exhibit Rajasic feelings to test the faith of the devotee. Even if some defects should actually be present in the Chosen Guru, the devotee may utilise those very defects for his own good by training himself to ignore those defects altogether and to admire, imitate and follow only that which is good in the Guru. Pitiable indeed is the condition of the man who is not trained to appriciate merits in others, but who has made himself keen enough to discern only the faults in them, especially in those who are legitimately in the position of Teachers for the whole humanity by reason of their pure heredity, their sustained austerity, their faultless and noble antecedents, their immense and deep learning, their unbounded sympathy and love for all, their readiness to help and their absolute selflessness. True devotion to the holy Guru is absolutely necessary for every genuine student of Atma-Vidya[1].

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1. यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ ।

14. True devotion and true knowledge are, in the main, but the same, and they lead to the same end;—

Knowledge.

Devotion, in truth, is but the Emotional aspect of Gnana or Knowledge. To the student of the path of Gnana the universe is but the Self[1], the ultimate Noumenon, as appearing to be limited by the unreal or Phenomenal. The real object of all perception is only the Self in manifestation. To the ordinary man perception is of

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तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः ॥

(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्)

गुरुभक्तिं सदा कुर्याच्छ्रेयसे भूयसे नरः ।

(ब्रह्मविद्योपनिषत्)

न गुरोरधिकः कश्चित्त्रिषु लोकेषु विद्यते ।
दिव्यज्ञानोपदेष्टारं देशिकं परमेश्वरम् ॥
पूजयेत्परया भक्त्या तस्य ज्ञानफलं भवेत् ।
यथा गुरुस्तथैवेशो यथैवेशस्तथा गुरुः ॥
पूजनीयो महाभक्त्या न भेदो विद्यतेऽनयोः ।
अद्वैतं भावयेद्भक्त्या गुरोर्देवस्य चात्मनः ॥

(योगशिखोपनिषत्)

1. ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम् । (मुण्डकोपानिषत्.)
सर्वं ह्येतद्ब्रह्म । (माण्डूक्योपनिषत्.)
आत्मैव तदिदं विश्वम् । (भागवतम् ११—२८-)

manifestation alone which is mistaken for the Real. So long as he is acting out his part in life, consistently with his external form, without trying, by means of introspection, to realise in conciousness his own true nature, the whole universe around is indeed real to him. But to the student of Gnana-Marga Jeevatwam, which implies individualisation and separateness in the Self, is shown to be absolutely unreal. As Eswara is none but the One Self as appearing to be governed by Satwic Maya, so is Jeeva also the Self governed by Avidya. The numerator, as it were, in both is the Infinite Self, and any quantity of limited denominator cannot in the least affect or lessen the Infinity of the numerator. The Infinite-Self remains for ever Infinite. We are all that same Self. Such realisation is the goal of Gnana-Marga[1], and the Glory of the Mukta or Liberated[2].

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1. अभेददर्शनं ज्ञानम् । (स्कन्दोपनिषत्)

2. संप्राप्यैनमृषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः कृतात्मानो
वीतरागाः प्रशान्ताः । ते सर्वगं सर्वतः प्राप्य
धीराः युक्तात्मानः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति ॥

(मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३.)

DISCOURSE IV.

On Evolution.

(ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्वस्थाः—भ–गी)

Universe exists for Jeevas.

1. Man, we are told, is the universe in miniature. The study of man is the study of the universe. The reality in man, as in the whole universe, is the Self alone ; all else is unreal, being the offspring, as it is said, of Maya Who has no subsisting reality of Her own apart from the Self of Whom She is but the Power. Corresponding to the three aspects of the Self, Sat, Chit, Ananda, She exhibits in Herself the three primary qualities or Gunas, Satwam, Rajas and Tamas, and this correspondence is because of the fact that She is inseparable from, and in fact one with, the Self. The Self is ever the Infinite One and His Maya-Sakti (Power of Maya), though also Infinite,—being one with Him, is the means of manifestation and is therefore the source of finiteness and manyness. She is the mother of the Phenomenal. There is manifestation when some one of Her three Gunas, by becoming more prominent than the other two, disturbs the equilibrium of Gunas of Her unmanifest state. In

the state of manifestation, She assumes different names, according to the quality that predominates. It has been pointed out that when Satwam is in the ascendant, She is known by the name Maya itself, that when Rajoguna is prominent She is called Avidya, and that when Tamas is predominant She is known as Tamasi. It has also been stated that the Self, appearing through Satwic Maya, is Eswara, appearing through Rajasic Avidya, is Jeeva, and appearing through Tamasi, is Matter, and that the universe of manifestation comprises these three Principles, Eswara, Jeeva and Matter. Of these three Principles, Jeeva is the one for whom the universe is in existence. It is not to serve His own purpose Eswara enlivens the universe, for He has no purpose of His[1] own, He being Apthakamah. He is compelled by no binding reason to manifest His life under limitations. All that may be said is it is His Swabhava[2] or nature to put forth such manifestation. By virtue of His appearance as the Enlivener of the universe, Jeevas or individual beings are placed within the divine influence of His life, and they, each of

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1. न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
(भगवद्गीता ३–२२.)

2. देवस्यैषस्स्वभावोऽयमाप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा ।
(मा-उप. गोड-का.)

them, partake of that life, according to their respective needs in their progress onwards towards the ultimate goal of their individual existences. It may be said that, if there should be a purpose served by the maintenance of the universe, it is the purpose of Jeevas that is so served. The third Principle, Matter, as shown in the last discourse, serves also the purpose of Jeevas alone, because, its use is only in the preparation of the bodies of Jeevas, of Lokas or Regions for the habitation of Jeevas, and of the articles of sustenance for the up-keep of the bodies of Jeevas. The whole universe exists because of the existence of Jeevas. The Essential Characteristic in the Jeeva, Jeevatwam or individuality, rests, as indicated above, on Avidya, the Rajasic aspect of Maya, and it follows therefore that the universe is preserved on account of Avidya. Avidya is the very root of the universe[1]. When this root is unearthed, when Avidya is dispelled by Atma-Vidya, the illusive nature of Jeevatwam and of the phenomenal universe is alike realised. But, so long as Avidya is allowed to domineer, the universe is true, Jeevatwam is real, and progress onwards in Evolution and retrogression

1. अनाद्यविद्ययाविष्णोरात्मनः सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
निर्मितो लोकतन्त्रोऽयं लोकेषु परिवर्तते ॥

(भागवतम् १२—११.)

backwards in Involution of Jeevas are also facts.

Evolution only for Thinker.

2. The term 'Evolution' means generally unfoldment or unrollment. An entity is said to evolve when it unfolds or shows forth, by degrees, the several powers locked up in its inner nature, by gradually removing, one after another, the impediments which stand in the way of such powers being exhibited. Evolution has reference only to the Thinker (Vyavaharika Jeevatma of the waking condition) who is active both externally and internally under the influence of Avidya. No theory of Evolution can be true when the Real Paramarthika Jeevatma, the Soul, is alone considered, for He is One, Universal and Unchangeable; nor can any such theory have reference to the Dreamer (Prathibhasika Jeevatma) because, he is only a shadow, as it were, of the Thinker, having no subsisting individuality or definiteness of embodied existence independently of the Thinker. If there should be any true Theory of Evolution, it can relate to the Thinker or Vyavaharika Jeevatma alone. The Thinker being an embodied, individual Jeeva, when he progresses onwards, there is gradual concomitant change, by way of improvement, in his embodiment also. This embodiment continues to exist until he is finally merged in the Real Soul.

3. These facts being remembered, the term 'Evolution' may be roughly defined as follows:—It means the gradual unfolding of the nature and the powers of the Inner Reality in the Thinker, namely, Paramarthika Self; it is the steady progress of the Thinker or Limited Individual Jeevatma towards the state of the Real, Unlimited, Universal Sarvatma in whom he is to be finally merged in Eternal Bliss and Peace, such progress being followed by a gradual improvement in the garb or outward appearance of the Thinker, that is to say, by a gradual subtilising of the limiting body, until the garb or body is finally dispensed with altogether. Evolution, then, meaning unfoldment or unrollment, may perhaps be considered as necessarily implying an antecedent Involution which is the act of infolding or inwrapping. It may therefore be said that, for the appearance of the Thinker himself, there must have been considerable antecedent involution from the Paramarthika state of being. But when did the first appearance of the Thinker take place, none can tell. If, as a matter of fact, Paramarthika Self Himself should have become degraded into the condition of the Thinker, it may be possible to say when such degradation took place. But the fact is, He has never been, nor can ever be, degraded. The creation of the Thinker in Him is no real

"Evolution" and "Involution".

fact, but, there is only an appearance of the Thinker by virtue of ignorance and illusion, and none can date the begining of these. Hence the question—when did the Real Self come down in involution to the state of the Thinker, that is to say, when did Avidya first create Jeevatwam or individuality—need not and cannot be answered. Avidya and Jeevatwam are therefore described to have been beginningless, Anadi. [The Theory that the Spirit actually descended along the downward arc of involution until He reached the stage of the mineral, and from this stage He goes upwards along the onward course of evolution back to His highest and truest state, is based somewhat upon a misapprehension of facts and is not supported by the Aryan Scripture. The acceptance of this theory will necessitate the acceptance of the opinions, among others, that Jeevatwam is actually created at some particular stage, and that there is evolution from the stage of the mineral, opinions which are directly contradictory to the teachings of the Great Ones. That there is and can be no evolution from the mineral stage will be pointed out later on.] The progress in Evolution of the Thinker is considerably expedited, as pointed out in the last discourse, by going along the path of devotion, Bhakti-Marga, steadily imbibing, as he goes on, the satwic qualities of Eswara. The devotee, on reaching the end of this

path of devotion, will be found placed almost in the same exalted position as of Eswara Himself. The Thinker (Jeeva), as such, has his existence in Rajasic Avidya. Avidya has elevating Satwic Maya above, and downward dragging Tamasi below. The Jeeva stands between them, and is ever subject to their inevitable influences. His devotion to Eswara, Whose Sakti is Satwic Maya, raises him up; his yielding to Tamasic slovenliness brings him down[1]. His rising up is 'Evolution' and his going down may be called 'Involution.' The Jeeva is Evolving upward when he is on the way to get out of the control of Avidya, rising to a superior state of being. He may be said to Involve when he gets domineered over by the Tamasic aspect of his nature. 'Evolution' is the ascent towards the state of absolute, blissful consciousness realisable on the attainment of freedom from out of the inwrapping limitation of Avidya. 'Involution' is the descent into ignorance and misery, the following of Tamasi. Involution is the degradation of the Jeeva for allowing Tamasi to domineer. The degree of involution in any case depends upon the extent to which Tamasi is

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1. ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥

(भगवद्गीता १४—१८.)

allowed to domineer. In a large number of cases such degradation takes the form of a special punishment in the shape of life in the sub-human kingdom. Evolution is completed when the Thinker, having become altogether free from Avidya, is no more an individual Thinker, but, shines in the infinitude of his bliss and peace as Paramarthika Pure Self. Involution may be considered as completed when Avidya and Tamasi together have exhausted all their powers of limitation by appearing to confine the Thinker within the thickest possible wall of enclosure, so that his very existence within may not even be suspected; in this lowest stage, the Thinker being, for the time, almost deprived even of the powers of feeling, he is verily in a Sushuptaic or sleepy condition (as in vegetable life). In the great state of the universe, some Jeeva Citizens are sent down to the prison-cells, because, they commit grievous sins and are guilty of gross perversion, being completely influenced by Tamasi, while others are given State-privileges and honours, in the shape of life in the higher or happier regions, because, these latter work on well against the forcible downward current of the influence of the lower nature.

4. As, accordingly, Evolution implies elevation and reward of the Jeeva, and Involution implies his degra-

Evolving Thinker—of man alone.

dation and punishment, they can, in justice, have reference only to the one who is free to choose between good and evil, that is to say, between descent into bondage, ignorance and misery on the one side, and ascent unto freedom, light and bliss on the other. It is only free, voluntary, deliberate submission to Tamasi that can be properly punished. It is only free, voluntary, onward march pushing aside the opposing currents of the lower nature that deserves reward. Evolution and involution therefore can be only for the responsible, free agent, and for none else. Such agent is found only in the Thinker in Man. The normal condition of the Thinker is maintained in Man alone. I shall call this Thinker in man by the term 'man' itself. Man stands between good and evil, and it is left to his free choice to choose between them[1]. It is left to him to rise up to the Divine state, or fall into a sub-human existence, or have his life, as man, repeated over and over again with its numerous troubles and anxieties. It is on account of the various modes of

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1. श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ॥

(काठकोपनिषत् २.)

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

(भगवद्गीता ६–५.)

choosing, men themselves appear now as the ensouling Jeevas in all the grades of individual existence in the universe, human, super-human and sub-human. It is his actions or Karmas, done by him *as man*, that determine the nature of his future existence. It is said that, as a result of very bad Karma, he takes sub-human bodies (namely, lower animal and vegetable bodies), that, as a result of very good Karma, he is given super-human bodies of light and happiness and that, when his Karma is partly sinful and partly meritorious, he takes again another human body[1]. This is, however, only a general statement which is, no doubt, true. The details, however, of the working of the Law of Karma are innumerable, and they can be found out only by a close study of the Sacred-Books. When the Thinker comes again into his normal human body, he becomes again competent to do fresh acts of Karma, and he may, by such acts, either add to or subtract from, or modify the effect of,

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1. अथैकयोर्ध्व उदानः पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् । (प्रश्नोपनिषत् ३.)

तामसा निरयं यान्ति राजसा मानुषानथ ।
सात्विका देवलोकाय गच्छन्ति सुखभागिनः ॥
निष्कैवल्येन पापेन तिर्यग्योनिमवाप्नुयात् ।
पुण्यपापेन मानुष्यं पुण्येनैकेन देवताः ॥

(महाभारतम् शां–प. ३०२.)

his previously acquired store of Karmas. When he is in other bodies, he does not do any fresh Karma, but is only experiencing the results of the Karma he did while in human body. Every non-human Jeeva, high or low, that is to say, super-human or sub-human, must have been at one time 'man,' and his present enjoyments or sufferings are only the direct results of the Karmas he did then. It may be said that every Jeeva of the universe, from the lowest tiny plant up to the highest Spiritual Saint, is either man-past or man-present (if I may use the terms). Understanding the term 'man' in this broad sense, we can say that the whole universe is in existence only for man, that is, the Thinker in man. This Thinker is the Vyavaharika Jeeva of every description in the universe. This Thinker, who in his own normal state, is 'man', misuses his powers of thought and creates more and more of limitations around himself by persistent thoughts of narrowing selfishness and by outward exertion to achieve the selfish end in view at the expense, or to the sorrow, of another or others. The Thinker, for such misuse of powers, is punished, whenever necessary, by being compelled to assume sub-human forms devoid of powers so misused. Such are the Jeevas of the lower animal kingdom and of the plant-life. In the same way, the normal Thinker in man, by long practice in selfless and meritorious actions, rises to a superior

state of being. The whole universe is supplied with Jeevas of all grades of existence to inhabit it all over from out of the one central class of 'Humanity.' Some do good and go above to states of existence higher up. Others do evil, and go down to lives below. After their experience of happiness or suffering, as the case may be, is over in those other conditions of being, they come back to their own normal state of humanity, and continue to do good or evil in conformity with their previous habits. They go again to other states and come back, and so on. Thus, it is seen that no Jeeva iu any region or state of being other than the human can be said to belong really to that region or state. He is only temporarily there. His place there is only as reward or punishment for the time being. In the either case of going upwards towards the Divine and going downwards into the sub-human states of existence, he has to start only from his own abode of 'humanity' wherein alone he can do acts for which he can be held responsible. Reward and punishment have reference only to the human kingdom. Humanity is the only school where the distinction between good and bad is taught and where provisions are made for the training up of the Thinker[1]. The Thinker, by virtue

1. तस्मादात्मदर्शनायेहैव यत्नः कर्तव्यः [इहैव–मनुष्यशरीर एव–गो–टी]

(काठकोपनिषत् श्रीशं–भा ६.)

of such training, is able to pierce through the wall of limitation, Jeevatwam, which has made the Infinite Self appear as the Thinker, and to rise up, by gradual means, to his own Paramarthika state of absolute freedom, and this process of piercing and rising is the process of Evolution.

General results of Karma.

5. To find out the exact nature of this process of Evolution of the Thinker in man, we have to know the general results of the different kinds of Karma, good, bad and mixed. By a general study of the nature of the working of the Law of Karma, the following facts may be ascertained :—

(a) Good Karma:—Its results:—

i. Purification of the Mind, that is to say, the removal from the mind of its drossiness which is the effect of thoughts of narrowing selfishness and gross sensuality.

ii. Happiness in the higher regions, Bhuvarloka and Swarloka, during the period between death and re-birth in the physical world, Bhooloka. If the Karma is of an exceptional nature, the Thinker may even be made an office-bearer with authority in such higher regions.

iii. Coming back, as man again, to earth-life with facilities for further purification of the mind.

N. B :—If the Karma is done without attachment to its fruits or results, and the Thinker has been going along Gnana-Marga, the path of knowledge, having his mind completely purified, he is not bound to return again to earth-life.

(*b*) Bad Karma :—Its results :—

i. The Mind becomes more and more impure.

ii. Suffering in the nether region or Hell (Portion of Bhuvarloka) during the period between death and re-birth here.

iii. If the Karma is very bad, the Thinker, after his suffering in Bhuvarloka is over, is made to take birth in the world in the lower animal or vegetable kingdom as part of his punishment.[1]

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1. मनुस्मृतिः १२. ५३—८१.
स्वाभाविक्या त्वशास्त्रीयया प्रवृत्या पश्वादिस्थावरान्ता अधो गतिः स्यात् ।
(केनोपनिषत् श्रीशं—भा. १.)

'स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतं ।'
स्थाणुं वृक्षादिस्थावरभावमन्येऽत्यन्ताधर्मा मरणं प्राप्यानुगच्छन्ति ।
(काठकोपनिषत् ५. श्रीशं—भा—च.)

In some cases, these lower births immediately follow the previous earth-life.

iv. After his sufferings in the hell or as sub-human Jeeva are over, the Thinker comes again to assume man's body. He is then placed within en_ vironments very unfavourable for his progress onwards. These bad en- vironments or impediments to advance- ment are in consequence of his own previous misdoings.

(*c*) Mixed Karma:—Its results:—

(Partly good and partly bad)

i. The Mind becomes purer in certain res- pects and more impure in certain others.

ii. The Thinker suffers for some time in the hell, and enjoys for some time in the happy regions above.

iii. Afterwards, he ordinarily takes birth here again as man.

N.B:—It should be clearly kept in mind that Lokas such as those mentioned above are different from one another, not locally or spatially, for, all Lokas or Planes of existence are everywhere, interpenetrating one

another, but by virtue of the difference in the density or substilty of matter with which they are respectively built and in the graded capacities of Jeevas which enable them severally to function in them.

In all the above cases, the formation of the physical body and the selection of the parents for re-birth are all in conformity with the mental condition or tendencies of the coming Thinker. The terms 'Punishment' and 'Reward' in the above have to be understood in a peculiar sense. They mean something more than what they literally imply. In providing punishment in the shape of sub-human life, Eswara brings about certain states of existence in which alone some of the defects created by the Thinker in himself may be purged out of his nature. In sending the Thinker to the regions of suffering or happiness, as the case may be, Bhuvarloka and Swarloka, after death in Bhooloka, the Divine object is that the lessons learnt by him as man in his earthly life may be assimilated by him by repeated experiences of the results of his usual thoughts, bad or good, so that definite and more or less permanent faculties of mind may be formed, with which he has to come back to humanity for learning further lessons.

6. From the above facts it may be gathered that the chief effect of Karma is on the 'mind of man.'

Good Karma purifies it, bad Karma renders it impure.

Main points relating to Evolution.

The suffering of the Thinker in the hell, his going down to the sub-human kingdom, and his enjoyments in the happy regions, are all only temporary deviations from, or breaks in, the regular path of Evolution. They do not themselves form part of the course of Evolution, though they are, no doubt, necessary, as indicated above. Strictly speaking, Evolution only denotes the gradual purification of the mind of the Thinker and his consequent, steady, on-ward progress. 'Involution' is the process by which the mind becomes more and more impure. The purification or otherwise of the mind takes place only in the earthly life of man. Having these facts in view, it may be said definitely that the theory of evolution can have reference only to the progress of the Thinker in man from his own position as Vyavaharika Jeevatma to the ultimate state of being of the Real Paramarthika Self, in the course of a long series of earthly lives as man, by a steady, gradual purification of the mind, so that the Inner Atma or Self may, in the end, shine out completely in the immensity of His Glory. The main points on the subject may be stated as follows:—

(1) Evolution and involution are only for 'Man' as such.

(2) 'Evolution' means the purification of his mind and his consequent progress from the condition of the limited Thinker to the state of the Unlimited Self.

(3) Man can bring about his progress or deterioration only in the earth-life, in which alone responsible Karmas are performed.

(4) During his stay in other Lokas, in the period between his death and rebirth in Bhooloka, his mental acquisitions of the preceding earth-life are transformed into permanent faculties of mind, and there is neither Evolution nor Involution for him in such other Lokas.

(5) In every lower animal or plant, its ensouling Jeeva is only undergoing a temporary punishment for some bad Karma he did *as man* formerly.

(6) The modern, generally accepted, Theory of Evolution, propounded by some of the Western thinkers, that there is gradual progress from the mineral condition to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal, and from the animal to the human, is not true.

7. In the first place, no Religion of the world supports the Western Theory of Evolution. It is only during the last few years Prof. Henry Drummond

No Religion supports the Western Theory.

and some other thinkers have been making some unsuccessful attempts to reconcile together Religion and the Western Theory. Prof. Huxley however thinks that the doctrine is neither theistic nor anti-theistic. The religious indifference found in the theory as propounded by Mr. Darwin and also by Mr. Herbert Spencer is well-known. Mr. Benjamin Kidd, in his work "Social Evolution", says that "the tendency of the doctrine of evolution has been generally considered to be on the whole profoundly anti-religious".

The Western Theory is in itself defective.

8. In the Western doctrine, even as described by Prof. Henry Drummond in his work "The Ascent of Man", "Evolution" means improvement in forms or phenomenal appearances, physical or mental, without regard to the underlying 'Reality' which bears such forms or is the cause of such phenomena. The Western evolutionists say that Evolution is going on in the universe. But, what it is that is evolving they have nothing definite to say about. They observe different bodies or objects in the universe occupying different positions in the matter of degree of advancement, and say that one is more advanced than another. Then, they make a regular scale of different degrees of evolution or advancement.

But, they do not distinctly say that what is now found in the more advanced state of being must, in its essence, have been in existence formerly, and must have been then in a less advanced condition. In other words, they do not say that the underlying entity, which bears a more advanced form to-day, is the same that formerly must have appeared in a coarser garb. If, accordingly, they do not posit the existence of a continuing entity, it is not possible to see what can be meant by 'advancement'. If it is not the same entity that makes the advance from the lower to the higher state, no advancement or Evolution takes place at all; for, there is nothing permanent that advances or rises in evolution. In fact, the Evolutionists of the West, in general, have ignored the possibility of the continuing presence of the subsisting Reality, and have only directed their attention to some stations on the road of evolution, without trying to know whether there is any one journeying along the road, and, if so, who he is and how he is going on.

The Aryan Scripture and The Theory of Evolution.

9. The leaders of the modern Theosophical movement seem to hold that the Western Theory is partially true as it deals with the evolution of the form-side of things. They also say that the Ancient Aryan Scripture reveals the fact of Evolution that goes on in the universe in respect of its

form-side and its life-or-consciousness-side together (the term 'Evolution' being used in a sense similar to that in which it is used by the Western thinkers). The fact seems to be this :—The Western Theory of Evolution has considerably attracted the attention of a great many thinking minds by reason of its being able to explain many facts in nature which are otherwise by them considered quite inexplicable. It has satisfied the minds of many by showing that the universe is not one of a chaos, and that everything is going on in it according to definite order and law. The fascination inherent in the Theory itself is considerably increased by the excellent way in which the Theory is put forth and propounded by the leading Evolutionists of the West. Theosophists, who have had the benefit of the study of the lucid works of such leading authors, have in themselves imprinted permanently the principal ideas dealt with in such works, and they, in spite of their genuine attempts to have complete independence of thought, have not been able to give up such ideas, and the consequence is that, when any passages, which appear to express similar ideas, are met with in the Sacred Literature, to whose immense store of Wisdom and Light they are now introduced little by little, they are at once naturally inclined to conclude that the very same ideas, which have already gained ground in their belief, are support-

ed by such passages. But, a careful examination of such passages will show that they give no manner of support to such ideas at all. The Western Theory of Evolution does not represent facts in nature. Not even partially it is true. The latest Theory of Evolution of Consciousness, propounded by Mrs. Annie Besant, may be accepted only to the extent to which it can be applicable to the progress or evolution of the Thinker in man. The idea, however beautiful may it be, that there is gradual Evolution from the stage of the mineral to that of the vegetable, from that of the vegetable to that of the lower animal, and from the latter to that of man, has no foundation whatsoever and is supported by no passage in the Aryan Scripture.

No Evolution from Mineral Condition.

10. No Evolution is possible from the stage of the mineral to that of the vegetable. For, there is nothing in the mineral that can evolve. As observed in a previous discourse, there is, no doubt, the life of Eswara in the mineral also. But there is no entity or Jeeva in it that can progress onwards. The whole mineral kingdom has emerged out of the Tamasi-aspect of Maya, and it forms the material which goes to make the bodies of Jeevas and their means and places of support. There is no Jeeva in every atom or particle in the mineral kingdom; but only, the bodies of Jeevas are composed of mineral matter.

Mineral matter, not composing the body of Jeeva, is called 'inorganic matter'. The body of Jeeva, though also composed of mineral matter, is called 'Organic body'. The difference arises in the following way. The lowest phenomenon conceivable in the physical world is the physical atom. A combination of several such atoms gives rise to two kinds of existence, the organic and the inorganic. When an object consists of a number of atoms only without there being any Co-ordinating life-principle connecting together those atoms in harmonious co-operation for serving some common end, it is termed 'inorganic substance.' Such are all objects which are generally considered 'inanimate.' Not because there is no life at all in such objects they are called 'inanimate,' for they have their very existence in the life of Eswara, but because these several atoms or primordial units, as Mr. Herbert Spencer would call them, are not in their combination governed by a common principle of life which compels such units or atoms to work harmoniously in definite ways to serve a common object. In an organic body, however, the constituent atoms are kept together by such a superintending and controlling life-principle of an entity or Jeeva who is the occupier of the body, and the atoms are made to work harmoniously in particular directions. It is the presence or the absence of such a connecting life that makes, in fact, all the difference

between the organic and the inorganic sides of nature. Thus, there is immense mineral matter outside the bodies of Jeevas, that is, not ensouled by Jeevas. It is clearly mentioned in the Holy Books that Jeevas are only in four classes of bodies, namely, Jarayuja, Andaja, Swethaja and Uthbhijja, in addition to the Manasa bodies of Devas[1]. Uthbhijja are the plants, and they are mentioned as the last or lowest class of Jeevas. This shows that there are no Jeevas in the mineral. The view that is now and then expressed by some modern thinkers that "every grain of sand has its 'Jeevatma'" is not correct. It is sometimes argued that, because Sruthi says that from ether has sprung Gas, from Gas has sprung Fire, from Fire Liquid, from Liquid Solid, from Solid Plants, from Plants Food, and so on[2], the fact of evolution, both within and above the mineral kingdom, is evidently declared by Sruthi Herself. But, no evolution is meant to be described by such statements. The

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1. जरायुजोऽण्डजश्चैव स्वेदजश्चोद्भिज्जस्तथा ।
एवं चतुर्विधः प्रोक्तो देहोऽयं पाञ्चभौतिकः ॥
मानसस्तु परः प्रोक्तो देवानामेव संस्मृतः ।

(शिवगीता—८.३४)

2. आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्नेरापः । अद्भ्यः पृथिवी । पृथिव्या ओषधयः । ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम् । अन्नाद्रेतः । रेतसः पुरुषः ।
(तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्—ब्र—व.)

passage referred to only indicates the manner in which a reincarnating Jeeva comes back to earth-life. It may also be taken to mean that the above substances have been created, that is to say, have come out in manifestation, in the beginning of a Kalpa or Cycle of the Universe, in the order mentioned, and that each of the atoms of which each substance is composed is made up of several atoms of the just preceding substance. Several ether-atoms together make one gas-atom, several gas-atoms make one fire-atom, and so on. Several molecules of earth go to make clay. With lumps of clay brick is made. With a number of bricks a room is built, and a number of rooms are found in a house. It cannot be said that earth evolved into clay, clay into brick, brick into a room, and room into a house. No question of evolution arises at all. There is the Supreme Maker of all things, Who, in the beginning of every Kalpa, prepares the necessary materials of all grades of substance from out of the one Primordial Root-matter, Prakrithi or Tamasi of Maya.

Nor from vegetable to animal, and animal to human.

11. As regards the alleged evolution from the vegetable condition to the animal, and from the animal to the human, there is no authority except the bare statement of the Western Evolutionists. They cannot actually trace the passage of an entity from a lower to a higher

state of being. They are only able to see that one being is more advanced than another, and that this universe is inhabited by beings of manifold gradations of advancement, physical and mental. Only this much is directly perceived by them. They, then, mentally arrange the beings under different groups, and these groups, as well as the beings in each of these groups, are then arranged according to a regular and graduated scale of advancement. They, then, perceive that the ladder of advancement created by them presents a really beautiful appearance, and they infer that Nature, beautiful as She is, must have brought about the advancement of beings only in the order in which the rungs of the ladder appear. They have, however, to realise that their theory of evolution is built, not upon facts in nature actually experienced by them, but only upon their own inference from experienced facts. The question is—how far is the inference acceptable? A big library may contain a large number of books of different gradations of thought or size. They may be arranged in some regular order. Can it be proper to infer that a book written by an advanced author has evolved out of a book written by an ordinary man, or that a big volume has come out of a small book? The comparison, however, may not be quite appropriate, but it sufficiently indicates the nature of the objection that may be validly raised against the present-day theory of evolution.

Again, if, as the Western thinkers say, there is growth or evolution from the vegetable state to the animal and from the animal to the human, the question arises—What is the cause of growth? Why should an entity which was sometime ago in the vegetable state now appear in an animal body? Is its advancement or promotion to a higher state of being only accidental? If not, in what way did it merit the promotion? Is a vegetable capable of doing any responsible act or Karma for which it is rewarded? If it is itself not capable of doing any,is its ascent in evolution compulsory and due to the act of another agent? If so, does it mean that the fruits of action may go to one who did nothing to merit them? Among the lower animals themselves, one is found more unhappy throughout its life-period, from the moment of its birth, than another. Why should it be so? What is the cause of special suffering? The Theosophic idea of Group-Souls does not seem to throw real light on this question. It is sometimes said that the animals themselves may not feel as we suppose they do. Whatever may be the intensity of the animals' feelings, indications are clear enough to show their feelings of pain and pleasure separately. The differences in the animals' experiences of pain and pleasure must have their own causes. What are they? The causes must relate to the previous existence of the Jeeva in question. This previous life could not have been that of a lower

animal; for, lower animals can do no responsible Karma. The law of Karma and justice, if it is true at all, shows unmistakably that there is no real foundation for the belief that there is evolution going on below the stage of man. Every brute, every little insect and every one of the plants and trees, all were, and are going to be again, human beings themselves. They are all only temporarily suspended from the class of humanity for some offences. They are always Thinkers, as we are now. Only, they have, by compulsion, ceased for some time to think. We, as Thinkers, are all connected together by the bond of Universal Brotherhood, all being, as we are told, the sons of the Lord of Mind.

A doubt.

12. A doubt may perhaps arise as the following:—If all non-human states of being are only the results of previous human Karma, in the beginning stages of the universe there must have been only men, and none else. Is there any authority to show that there was a time when there were men alone, and that the non-human states of being appeared only later on? The question presumes that there was a beginning for the universe. The universe has had no beginning at all. No doubt, every Kalpa or cycle of the universe has a beginning. But, at the beginning of a Kalpa, the universe makes its appearance in the condition in which it was just before the Pralaya that preceded the

Kalpa in question. The universe makes its appearance in every Kalpa, and is dissolved in every Pralaya. This alternative existence of Kalpa and Pralaya has had no beginning. None can say that there was a beginning for the existence of the Power of Maya in the All-Self. As there was no beginning for the universe, there could not have been any period of time when there were men alone. At all times there have been human as well as non-human states of being in the manifested universe. These facts also show that Karma too is beginningless.

What is progress of Thinker.

13. Having seen above that Evolution can be only for the Thinker in man and that it is his progress from the condition of the limited Thinker to the state of the unlimited Self, let us try to ascertain how this progress can be brought about. Progress of the Thinker means the improvement and growth of the 'mind' through which he thinks. The question is when is the mind said to grow? In the first place, what is meant by growth? As most of us are at present situated, we cannot directly perceive the actual growth of the mind and say what it is. We are however acquainted with 'growth' in the lower or physical plane or state. Nature being uniform, she may be presumed to have 'growth' in the higher or mental plane effected in the same or similar manner. What is then meant by 'growth' in the physical plane? All

vegetable and animal bodies develop out of the life-germ, the unit cell. The Western Scientists all agree in saying that the embryonic cell is the same for all living things, although, as regards the simplicity of the cell, there is difference of opinion (Vide H. H. Donaldson's "The Growth of the Brain"). The embryonic cell of the plant is the same as that of the animal; the embryonic cell of the lower animal is the same as that of man. The embryonic cell sometimes divides itself into two or more cells and sometimes, as in the case of the lower forms of life, becomes associated with new cells coming from outside. In any case, development of the embryo implies multiplication of cells. In this way, the embryonic cell develops into a perceptible body, whether of a plant or of an animal. Mere multiplication of cells, again, cannot make a living body. In the dead body, for instance, for sometime after death, there is found a large number of cells crowded together, but the body, as a whole, has ceased to be a living body. The living body requires a connecting life which keeps together and enlivens all the cells. So, along with the multiplication of cells, there is also the widening or expansion of the life within so as to control all the cells together. As is the case with physical life, growth of the mind means expansion of the mind. A man's mind is said to expand when his thoughts extend beyond his physical body and beyond his personality. As the

physical body grows by multiplication of cells, the mental body grows by multiplication of personalities. As the original unit-cell is the earliest and lowest state of the physical body, thoughts of one's own interests alone belong to the lowest stage of mind. Mind grows when the interests of others are also considered, as the physical body grows by the packing together of more cells. As there is a connecting life for all the cells together, selfless thoughts or thoughts of others' interests should be bound up together by a connecting and unifying knowledge that all are only One Self and that division or separation of interests is inconsistent with the Absolute Unity of the Central, Common Life. The end of evolution of the Thinker is reached when the evolving mental life becomes, by expansion, identical with the All-including Life, the Universal Self (here, note the fact that the term Brahma—meaning Universal Self–is derived from the root 'Brih' to expand) Without doubt, man, as man or Thinker, belongs to the mental world, as his very name indicates (Sans. root 'mun' means 'to think'). But, he is, in reality, the One Self appearing to be enclosed, for the time being, in a covering made of mind-stuff. If he wants to rise from 'mind' to 'Spirit,' he should learn to get out of the limitations of the mind, and he should get rid of all ideas of personality and individuality. If he will rise to a nobler state of existence than his present one, he must see that his thoughts cover the interests of

others and that those thoughts go on infinitely expanding. He must both intend others' benefit and act for others' good. His mind is said to expand, and he is said to make real progress only when he is purified by such altruistic thoughts and actions and by constant practice in genuine renunciation. In this way, the mind has to expand and expand until the limiting mind-covering becoming very thin is torn asunder. Then, the limitations of the Thinker are removed. He ceases to exist as Thinker any longer, and his Inner Self, the Paramarthika Soul, shines in His infinitude of existence, consciousness and bliss (Sat, Chit and Ananda). Thus is realised the ultimate end of the existence of the Thinker. If, however, the Thinker's thoughts and actions are directed exclusively towards personal and selfish ends, he is not performing the duty of man. He does not see his mind expand. On the other hand, it contracts more and more, and gets consequently thicker and thicker. The thinker, being only passively submissive, allows himself to be thoroughly controlled by the mind-influences, instead of himself being the master and controller of the mind and of the senses, putting them to proper uses and improving them for serving nobler purposes. He is not going forward in the path of evolution. He is only enacting the brute, preparing his own way for a future actual brute-life. There is this difference now between him, as at present he is, and

the brute. He is in a worse predicament than the other. He being man, every thought of his is a Karma. The brute is an irresponsible agent. Nature has Her strict accounts in which every Karma of man is entered. Man should therefore be very particular in seeing that the fruits of his Karma are not bitter ones. He should think only such thoughts and do only such actions as may widen his mind and raise him up in evolution.

Re-incarnation.

14. This is, no doubt, easily said ; but to actually bring about the expansion of the mind is indeed very difficult. If, however, the mind is trained regularly and in the proper direction with the aid of the proper Guru, the goal may not be far distant[1]. We should try to overcome any difficulty that may stand in our way. We should strive to widen and widen our circle of sympathy, though by slow degrees. Let us believe that we are no child-Souls and that we have advanced far enough in evolution as Thinkers. The bodies we are now wearing are not the first of the kind we have been made to wear. Our minds have had considerable

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1. दुर्लभो विषयत्यागो दुर्लभं तत्वदर्शनम् ।
दुर्लभा सहजाऽवस्था सद्गुरोः करुणां विना ॥

(वराहोपनिषत्)

अभ्यासवासनाशक्त्या तरन्ति भवसागरम् ।

(योगशिखोपनिषत्)

progress with other bodies like these, before we came into these our present bodies. Had we had no such progress before, we could never have found our way into the bodies of our advanced parents. The blooming intelligence of the youthful genius among our brothers is not a creature of yesterday, brought into existence by a capricious God, but it has had a long history of its own. It is ignorance to say that we have come for the first time into man's body only now. We have had several such bodies before, and we are, most of us, waiting to have many more. The student of physiology knows that particles of our bodies are coming and going every moment of our life-period, while the body, as a whole, continues the same. These bodies can live only if fresh particles come in, and worn-out ones go out. The subsisting reality in these is the physical life. Any element grosser or lower than that can come and go without affecting it. In the same way, the higher life, the subtiler mental life, subsists, and gross physical bodies come and go. Progress of mental life depends to a very great extent upon frequent changes of physical bodies[1]. This change of body, this going and coming of the body of the Thinker is called 'Death' and 'Re-incarnation.'

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1. अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ।
बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।

(भगवद्गीता ६–४५, ७–१९)

Heredity.

15. Some of the chief Western thinkers have suffered much for not having known the fact of reincarnation. There are many facts in Nature which they are unable to explain. They try, in vain, to explain many facts by reference to the law of physical heredity. The parents are the cause only of the physical body, and not of the mind or of the Jeeva. They can never transmit 'mind' to their children, unless it be through the physical body, and unless it be that the 'mind' is a production of physical matter, a theory which has now been given up, or disapproved of, by the best thinkers of the West, a theory which is just the reverse of the fact of Nature. The Jeeva, again, comes from afar, according to all the religions of the world. It is the physical body that is the expression or garment of the mind as well as of the Jeeva, but, not either of these the expression of the physical body. The Jeeva is the actor, and the body is his instrument. It is not all instruments that can be safely entrusted to all actors. That bodies and their environments differ from one another every one knows. Different Jeevas have to wield different instruments, and under different conditions. Unless these different Jeevas are already differently qualified, there is no reason for giving them different kinds of instruments to work with. The mental peculiarities of the reincarnating Jeeva require certain physical peculiarities for properly

expressing themselves, and the Jeeva is, by the Law of Nature, attracted to those parents who can furnish bodies bearing such physical peculiarities. This is the reason why it is found in most cases that the physical and mental peculiarities of the issue are similar to those of the parents. This is only consistent with the fact that physical heredity can transmit only physical peculiarities. Had the Western thinkers known the fact of Re-incarnation, they would not have felt the necessity for appealing, for a great many solutions, to the Law of Heredity, a law which has a very limited application.

Value of Western Scientific conclusions.

16. A careful consideration of the Laws of Karma and Re-incarnation together will show that, if the Western Evolutionists had the benefit of the knowledge of them their theory of evolution would probably have been quite different from what it is now. The Western Evolutionism, as it is, is, no doubt, the outcome of genuine, long-continued thinking of mighty intellects. But, the theory, rather, the alleged growth and process of evolution are abstractions of a very remote kind. (It may be noted in this connection that what is called the "species" which is said to evolve, according to the Western system, is itself but an abstraction.) They are not the realities. They are not even "the ways in which reality appears to us or may be conceived

to present itself to us" as Mr. F. B. Jevons remarked in his recent lectures on 'Religion in Evolution', but, they are only abstractions from the appearances of the reality. That the Western Sciences and the Theory of Evolution are only hypothetical and can never give a full explanation of the universe, and that they do not aim, and avowedly do not aim, at more is conceded by Mr. F. B. Jevons. He also says:— "Any hypothesis is now recognized by Science provided that it is capable of explaining the facts which require explanation. And only so long as it does explain them is it thus recognized. The moment it fails, or a more comprehensive hypothesis emerges, that moment the old one is thrown on to the scrap-heap of Science......All that she (Science) requires of her hypotheses is that they should account for the facts: verification, in the sense in which that word is defined in Mill's Logic, Science does not now profess to attain or even aim at." Thus, it is seen that the conclusions of the scientific investigations of the West are not quite infallible. They are, in fact, based upon no permanent foundations whatsoever. They are always liable to change.

It is satisfactory, however, to note that the tendency of the course of Western Science is now getting less and less opposed to the philosophical Truths of the Ancient Aryan Faith, and that the Western Science

itself fairly promises to become, sooner or later, a faithful handmaid of Atma-Vidya, as all true phenomenal sciences are bound to be, the Angas or auxiliaries of the Noumenal science.

DISCOURSE V.

The Four Stages of Evolution

AND

The Caste System.

(चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टम्. भ—गी)

Introduction.

1. In the last discourse a rough idea was formed of what is meant by evolution. Let us now try to mark out the principal stages of evolution and to see what peculiarities belong to each of them.

Activities classified and Renunciation

2. This universe is a universe of activities, and it may, for our present purpose, as also the manifold existences in it, be divided or classified according to the nature of the activities exhibited therein. Such activities may be classed under three heads:—

(1) Activities brought about by outside agencies. In such cases, the activities are the results of implicit obedience to external influences.

(2) The next class of activities is where they result from inward selfish promptings or desires, very often following external impulses. These activities

differ from those of the above class in that they are the immediate results of the prompting desires of the actor and are only indirectly connected with external impulses, if any, which produce in the actor such desires, while in the first class activity follows immediately, and is the direct result of, such external impulses.

(3) Next come activities resulting not from any selfish motive but from motives altruistic and selfless in character. Those who identify their interests with the interests of all others, and who are not blinded by external appearance of separateness, do only such actions as tend to universal good, actions intended to hasten all towards the ultimate goal.

The activities belonging to the last of the above classes are peculiar in their nature. They are activities so far as the universe is concerned, and are non-activities with regard to the acting entity. Curiously enough, such activities may be considered as activities and renunciation at the same time. The acting individual is acting for the good of all and is not acting for his individual benefit. While acting with all zeal and vigour, he has renounced all actions which may fix him to the wheel of Karma which constrains every one to experience the consequences of such actions. When we study this class of activities carefully, we find that, though they are in themselves activities, they are based upon renunciation. Their object is almost

identical with that of renunciation proper. Still, the path of this class of activities and the path of absolute renunciation remain distinct, the latter being more direct and immediate with reference to the Ultimate End; and it is even said that one who has adopted the way of absolute renunciation realises the oneness of the many to such an extent that voluntary activities, which necessarily imply some distinction between the actor, the action and that which is acted upon, become no longer possible for him. It is absolute renunciation of this kind that throws open the gates of the Infinite Absolute Existence. Such renunciation is said to be the very opposite of ignorance, greed and activity[1].

The Four Paths.

3. These considerations give us some idea of the several stages of the path leading up to the Divine Abode, For the sake of convenience, we shall call each one of these stages a path by itself. The first or lowest path is the path of obedience and has reference to the first class of activities brought about by, or being the result of obedience to, external influences. The second is the path of selfish action done with a view to secure

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1. अकामस्य क्रिया काचिद्दृश्यते नेह कर्हिचित् ।
यद्यद्धि कुरुते किञ्चित्तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः २—४)

कर्म न कुर्वन्ति यतयः पारदर्शिनः । (सन्यासोपनिषत्)

benefit or profit to oneself, and this path corresponds to the above second class of activities. The third, which corresponds to the activities of the third class, is the path of action for the good of others. The fourth and last is the path of renunciation, altogether avoiding, rather beyond, all activities. Everything existing or taking place in the universe has reference to one or the other of these four paths.

Paths and Gunas.

4. I may mention here that these defined stages have reference to the three Gunas which have brought about the existence of the universe, Tamas, Rajas and Satwam. It is enough for our present purpose to say that in the first path the external agencies convert Tamas or dark ignorance or inertness into Rajas or conscious selfish activity of the second stage. This activity increases as selfishness grows; and when egotistic Rajo-Guna is fully developed, and when all the unpleasant lessons of egotism are learnt, the Jeeva in question enters on the third path, the path of Satwa-Guna or goodness. It is after this quality of goodness is firmly established, it is after the Jeeva identifies his interests with the interests of others, the fourth path, the path of renunciation, becomes open to him, and it is at the end of this final path the equilibrium of Gunas is secured for evermore, the Soul being then called 'Gunathithah', beyond all qualities of limitation.

5. The whole of Humanity is progressing in the line of evolution along the above-mentioned four defined paths. These paths can be and are definitely marked in the universe as a whole, in the nations of the world, in the classes in the nation, and even in the life of the individual man, Any classification or division of the planes of existence in the universe, of the several nations of the world, of the classes in a nation, or of the life-period of a man, adopting as the principle of division the principle involved in the fourfold division of the path of evolution, must be as natural as the paths themselves are. Let us consider how such classification or division may be made.

Classification by reference to the Paths.

6. We shall, in the first place, take the universe, the whole manifested existence. The physical side of the universe, Bhooloka, in which the Tamasi aspect of Maya is most largely manifested in the inert density of its matter, has reference to the first path of evolution. The second, Kamic-or-desire-region, Bhuvarloka, is related to the second path, the path of action for one's own benefit. The third, namely, the manasic or pure-mental region, Swarloka, bears reference to the third path, the path of action for the good of others. The Super-Manasic or Spiritual region, the Abode of the

Paths and Lokas.

Supreme, the Plane of the Thuriya, corresponds to the path of renunciation.

Nations Classified.

7. Next let us take the different nations of this world. They also may be classed under four heads. First come those backward races that are in the lowest grades of evolution, such as those in Central Australia and Western or Equatorial Africa. The only mode of raising them in the scale of knowledge is that which begins in successfully making them obey the commands of the more knowing. If they do not so obey, no progress is possible in their case. The first lesson of knowledge is the lesson of obedience. It is after we have secured obedience in the man who may belong to some one of the Negro tribes of the Bight of Benin or to the Bantu family of the Kongo Francais that we are able to give him further teachings in knowlege or civilization. Under the second class of nations, nations progressing along the second path, the path of selfishness, the path of profit to oneself, come those nations that are known as the great commerical or trading nations, the nations of profit and loss, the nations like the English whose ruling Goddess is, to put it in the words of Ruskin, "the Goddess of Getting on" or "Britannia of the Market," or whose average individual member is not much troubled by any care "provided the price of stock does not fall" as the great Carlyle observed, as also those

nations of military power that use their power for bringing countries, one after another, under their rule or subjection, not so much induced by a motive to extend to such countries the manifold benefits of a powerful and at the same time sympathetic Government, as prompted by the chief object of securing all possible benefit to themselves. Next come those mighty nations whose motto is 'Help and uprightness,' whose principle of Government is 'just administration,' and whose military glory is a wall of protection around the helpless and the weak and the strength of the righteous cause. Then finally, in the highest stages of evolution of nations ought to be seen, wending on its way along the fourth path, the path of renunciation, the nation which, not being a nation of yesterday, has had an existence running over millenniums of years and which, having had such immeasurable past, has far outgrown the savage condition and has a civilization simple and pure, a nation which, leaving the second stage of evolution behind, the stage of selfishness, has found a great number of its people imbued with a spirit of selfless love and sympathy, everywhere exhibiting charitable inclinations, a nation which has had its glorious military history, a history which tells us that the only wars that were fought were provoked by just cause and ended in the establishment of righteousness, in the protection of the weak and in the extirpation of the vicious, a nation again which, having

thus trodden the three lower paths, passing now along the final path of renunciation, and having the benefit of a proper appreciation and the spread of the knowledge of the highest Spiritual Truths by and among a large number of its people, is actually in the position of the Spiritual Teacher to the rest of the nations. Such a highly evolved nation was the Aryan Hindu nation as was in existence before India became infected by corruption from inside, and poisoned by ruinous influences from outside. Whether or not thinkers agree as to the place of the Hindu nation among the nations of the world, this much is clear that nations in general may be classified according to the particular stage of progress reached by each of them, with specific reference to the aforesaid four natural paths.

The Caste System.

8. Let us then make our study more limited in scope and try to know whether we can recognise the four distinct paths in the case of classes of men belonging to a single nation. Every highly evolved nation must consist of groups of individuals, each such group having specific reference to some one of the above mentioned paths. In this connection, we must know that the particular stage of development of a nation may be ascertained by the stage of spiritual progress reached by the highly evolved members of the nation and by the general sense of appreciation in the nation of the progress made by

them. It is not necessary, in order to call a nation an advanced nation, that all the individual members of the nation should have made much progress. It is sufficient if the most prominent of them have advanced far enough, and the other members are more or less able to appreciate the real merit of such advanced members. In every highly evolved nation, therefore, there will necessarily be found some men least evolved, some men most highly evolved, and the others having their places between these two extremes. The four paths that we are studying indicate the true and natural principle of classification to be made of the people of a nation, and it is only in advanced nations that we will be able to trace all these paths of varying degrees of progress. It may be remembered that it is only in advanced organisms are found definite internal differentiations. Any classification made on the basis of this four-fold nature of the path of evolution must be indeed natural, and any kind of social fabric built on the foundation of such natural classification should be the most desirable one and therefore acceptable to all thinking men. It is upon this foundation the Aryan Caste System has been established; and such a system was found to be possible of establishment only in the Hindu Aryan Nation, it having been the only nation of sufficient antiquity wherein the four stages were distinctly traceable. I know that some of the Indian social reformers of the present day, being largely

influenced by a new material civilization from the West, may find it difficult to believe that our caste system is founded on natural truths. The Western civilization is a civilization, empirical in character and built up, not by spiritual men able to see things in their true light, but by the ordinary run of humanity, and based upon experiences running over only a few hundred years, a civilization which preaches on the one hand equality of men even with respect to social status and position, but which, on the other hand, is altogether unable to prevent the inevitable formation of classes in the West, whose conventionalities considerably check the practical application of the principle of what they call "Equality of men", an expression altogether misunderstood and misapplied by the Western thinkers. We shall see what some of the most prominent Englishmen themselves have to say about the state of their society and civilization and about the principles guiding them. Mr. Benjamin Kidd expresses his opinion in the following words:—"Those who wish to see the end of the present condition of society have taken most part in argumentation. Those who have no desire for change are of the class which always waits for action rather than argument. But a large section of the community, probably the largest section, while remaining unconvinced by the arguments used and more or less distrusting the methods proposed, feel that some change is inevitable.

It is with these that will probably rest the decisive part in shaping the course of future events. But at present they simply sit still and wait. They have no indication as to the direction in which the right path lies. They look in vain to Science and authority for any hint as to duty. They are without a faith; for, there is at the present time no Science of human society. Many of the spokesmen of Science who concern themselves with social problems continue to speak and act as if they conceived that their duty to society was to take away its religious beliefs. But it is not that they have any faith of their own to offer instead; they apparently have themselves no grasp of the problems with which the world is struggling as best it can. Science has obviously herself no clear perception of the nature of the social evolution we are undergoing. She has made no serious attempt to explain the phenomenon of our Western civilization. We are without any real knowledge of the laws of its life and development or of the principles which underlie the process of social evolution which is proceeding around us." From these words, we see that the English nation and perhaps similarly the other Western nations also are themselves unaware of the principles which guide their society and their civilization, and they simply allow their society to take its own course to whatever end it may lead them to. What is the precise nature of the Western society, and what is the

nature of its general tendency, Prof. Huxley describes in a somewhat forcible language. He says:—"Even the best of modern civilizations appears to me to exhibit a condition of mankind which neither embodies any worthy ideal nor even possesses the merit of stability. I do not hesitate to express the opinion that, if there is no hope of a large improvement of the condition of the greater part of the human family, if it is true that the increase of knowledge, the winning of a greater dominion over Nature which is its consequence, and the wealth which follows upon that dominion, are to make no difference in the extent and the intensity of want with its concomitant physical and moral degradation amongst the masses of the people, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet which would sweep the whole affair away as a desirable consummation—" (On Government, Nineteenth Century, May 1890). Similar thoughts are expressed by several others. As regards the Western science of Sociology, Mr. Leslie Stephen in a presidential address (March 1892) says that "There is no science of Sociology properly scientific and that what is now in existence is but a heap of vague empirical observations, too flimsy to be useful in strict logical inference." It is such a condition of society, it is such a kind of civilization, to destroy which in one sweep Prof. Huxley would hail the advent of a comet, that some of our imperfectly educated young men, and unfortunately some of our older

people also, would wish to substitute in India in the place of our ancient civilization. As to the desirability or necessity of any such substitution the great Sir Thomas Munro has given his opinion in the following words:— "I do not understand what is meant by the civilisation (civilising) of the Hindus; ... ... if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilised people, then, the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe; and if civilisation is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country (England) will gain by the import cargo." (Along with this opinion, we may note also the recent contribution by the Hon. Alex. Del Mar of New York showing that our Aryan Hindu civilisation must have been itself the progenitor of Western civilization). Our Aryan civilisation is one gradually built up, during a period of unimaginable length, by Divine Seers after considering rightly the nature of progress in evolution, understanding correctly the mode of working of the Law of Heredity, knowing fully the natural influences of particular environments, conditions and circumstan_

ces on persons subject to such influences, in short, realising thoroughly the unbreakable character of the Law of cause and effect. As an integral part of such civilization is found a system of castes, four in number, corresponding to the four natural paths of evolution. To state briefly, of the four castes, the Sudras are intended to go along the first path, the path of obedience; the path of the Vaishyas is the second, the path of gain or profit to oneself; the third path, the path of action without attachment to the fruits thereof is for the Kshatriyas whose duty is to fight, for the mere sake of fighting, in a righteous cause, and to protect the subjects; and the Brahmins are intended for the final path of renunciation.

Its modern condition.

9. It is not within our power to question the wisdom of the establishment of such a Caste System. But certainly it is within our power to prevent the successful working of any such system, and it may be plainly said that we have very successfully done this. Let us consider the grand old ideal and at the same time witness around ourselves the actual state of things. Where are our Brahmins? Certainly, we, many of the Brahmins of to-day, have our threads on and we daily go through the farce of Sandhya worship. But, applying the real test of Brahminhood, are we really prepared to tread along the path of renunciation? Have we any the slightest early chance of placing our

foot on that path? Can we say, with the least truth, that we have outgrown the other stages? Are we, with our present notions of things and motives of action, fit to tread along the third path even? How many among ourselves are so unselfish that our actions are done without being influenced by some personal motives? As a matter of fact, most of the Brahmins of our day have come down to the second stage of evolution, the stage of selfish action. The Brahmin fell, and with his fall came the fall of other castes also. The head got disordered, and the whole system has become confused. The Brahmin became selfish and a prey to the love of wealth and fame. He initiated change in society, and this change is going on day by day with increased vigour. The Brahmin does the business of a Vaishya, the Kshatriya as Kshatriya is no more, the Vaishya wants to pass for a Brahmin, and the Sudra wants to abolish altogether the system which makes his position not a very enviable one. The Brahmin, having lost the inner light, the light which had made him Brahmin, would still preserve his dignity as Brahmin and would demand from the Vaishya and the Sudra the respect due to the ideal Brahmin. The Vaishya and the Sudra however find in the modern Brahmin nothing that deserves any such respect, feel insulted by the arrogance of the Brahmin-in-form, and strive very naturally to raise themselves up to the position which, as they believe,

has been unwisely and improperly assigned to the Brahmin. I am far from blaming the Vaishya or the Sudra for his attitude towards the modern Brahmin. It is the Brahmin that has wrought all this mischief.

Causes of the fall of Brahminhood.

10. Let us now briefly consider how and why the Brahmin fell with a view to see whether there is any chance still left to set things aright in society. The following are among the causes of his fall:—

(1) Firstly, the original vernacular of the Hindu Aryans, which was the same as the language of the Vedas or the Great Aryan Scriptures, namely, Sanskrit, gradually ceased to be the vernacular even of the Brahmin, and many of the truths revealed in the Vedas were either forgotten or left unrecognised. The change in the vernacular of the Brahmin brought him more and more into contact with the ideas belonging to the place or race from which he borrowed his new language, and it created a wide gulf between him and his original pure Aryan ideas. If, however, his new language was not altogether different from Sanskrit, but only a dialect or corruption of Sanskrit, the dialect became for all practical purposes so much differentiated from the original tongue that the latter was to a large extent forgotten. Anyhow this change in the vernacular was surely a change for the worse so far as the possession of the Vedic ideas by the

Brahmin was concerned. Still, I believe this event may be utilised for our good. By the change in the vernacular, by our touch with the ideas other than the purely Aryan or Vedic, our field of knowledge may have got widened; but this widening of knowledge is useful only if our original Vedic ideas remain without being narrowed; and, if we have already lost many of those ideas, as most of us have surely done, it is our duty to recover them back one by one.

(2) Some are of opinion that the Brahmins of old, having been enjoying large patronage and support from the Kshatriya-Kings, were able to preserve unsullied their particular duties or Dharmas, and that with the cessation of such patronage they became gradually degraded. So far as we are concerned, such cessation of patronage has its own use, and it has placed us in a position to try our own independent strength and stability, without depending upon anything external to ourselves; and in this view this cause of our fall may also be for our good.

(3) As another cause I may mention that the frequent invasions over India by several foreign nations have considerably checked the spread of Vedic ideas and the due observance of Brahminical duties, and this was particularly the case during the period of the Mohammadan conquest and rule in India. The propagation of religious truths was altogether stopped, and books of wisdom had even to be kept hidden.

(4) And, I may also add that even our present vernacular languages are being neglected by us, and the ideas of religion with which many of our later vernacular books are full seem to lose all their hold on us.

These and probably many other causes also brought the Brahmin down from the high position that was his, and with him others also became disregardful of their respective duties or Dharmas. Although in the course of his fall the Brahmin continued rapidly to lose one after another the pure Aryan ideas of religion, he had nevertheless the special advantage of belonging to the developed section of the Aryan community. He was naturally in possession of a clear intellect, and he was in consequence taken into administrative and other kinds of service for remuneration by foreign and native rulers. His tasting more and more of the alluring fruits of remuneration in these and in other ways, together with his gradual loss of all ideas about the principles of renunciation, soon brought him down to the level of the Vaishya, and he was virtually made to re-follow the practice of hoarding up money and securing everything to himself to the exclusion of others. As the Brahmin thus fell, the darkness of ignorance spread thicker over the land, and the real Vedic religion became cloud-hidden, and the Aryan religion itself degenerated into a religion of forms only, sometimes of grotesque forms

even. Consequently many people, not satisfied with the form of religion followed by the ordinary Hindu, not knowing the ultimate Truths revealed by the Vedas, and at the same time being largely influenced by an alien civilization of a materialistic character, turned their backs upon our Aryan religion altogether and became more or less a prey to blind heterodoxy.

Caste System based upon Duties, not Rights.

11. The present day condemnation of the Caste System even by some earnest thinkers is due, for the most part, to the fact that in modern times members of the higher castes attend more to their rights than to their duties. The foundation for the Caste System is laid upon natural differentiations in the modes of activity and has reference only to varying duties or Dharmas. Difference in duties leads to difference in castes. The question of rights arises only incidentally. The mere fact of a man being born in the higher caste, though it is proof enough that he qualified himself in his previous lives to be admitted into the caste to which he now belongs, is not sufficient to entitle him to any respect due to the member of that particular caste unless he rightly performs the duties the Great One has prescribed for such member. If the duties are performed properly, regard and respect will of themselves come. One caste is regarded as superior to another only in

the sense that the duties of the former are more onerous and useful and more difficult of performance and that the person rightly performing such duties deserves better treatment and commands greater regard.

Castes defined.

12. A careful analysis of the Caste System will show that the castes, having reference to their characteristic Gunas or qualities[1], represent the several stages of the evolution of the Jeeva, the Thinker, from the lowest condition of dullness or inertia, Tamas, up to the highest Spiritual state beyond all Gunas (Gunathithasthhithih):—

(1) The Sudra is directed to obey and be of service to the members of the other three castes. Obedience to command is the first step in the progress of man, and the inherent Tamoguna or inertia in him is thereby gradually shaken out and he is trained to be active. The characteristic result of the passage of a Jeeva through this caste is the conversion of Tamas in his nature into Tamo-Rajas, a mixed quality of dull activity prompted by selfish motives which have

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1. तमः शूद्रे रजः क्षत्रे ब्राह्मणे सत्वमुत्तमम् ।
इत्येवं त्रिषु वर्णेषु विवर्तन्ते गुणास्त्रयः ॥
(महाभारतम्, आश्व—प—३९)

relation to the avoiding of evil and the securing of good or benefit.

(2) In the second stage, the stage of the Vaishya, the Jeeva develops his qualities by frequent repetition of Tamo-Rajasic activities necessary for the due performance of his caste Dharmas. In the course of the training in Vaishya life his Tamo-Rajasic qualities are gradually changed into simple Rajasic qualities. It is Vaishya Dharma to amass wealth in all honest ways possible, though tinged with selfish motives, by agriculture, rearing cattle, manufacturing articles, carrying on trade and the like.

(3) In the next stage, the Kshatriya Caste, the Jeeva in question improves still more his qualities by rapid strides and the end of this third stage is reached when his Rajasic qualities are thoroughly replaced by pure Satwic ones. The Kshatriya is the ruler and is directed to work and struggle in order to protect the interests of others, and the ideal Kshatriya is the one who performs his Dharma or duty for duty's sake without in the least considering his own selfish ends. This is what was taught to Arjuna by Lord Sri Krishna in Sri Bhagavadgita. Genuine altruistic, Satwic, qualities are the fruits of proper Kshatriya training.

(4) Then comes the last stage, that of the Satwic Brahmin. After reaching this stage the Jeeva has to enter into a course of training of a very difficult

nature. Till now, "development" meant, in the beginning, mere shaking out of inertia, and later on, conversion of one set of qualities and activities into another. Change was not considerable. But now, in the fourth stage, the Dharma of the Brahmin caste relates to a kind of training whose ultimate object is to take the Jeeva away altogether beyond all qualities and activities which originate from differentiation, and to lead him on to the Supreme Real state of Being, characterised by the absolute Oneness of the all in the Self, and in the course of such training the Brahmin becomes naturally the Spiritual teacher and general guide to the community at large.

Caste system natural.

13. Such are the four Castes established in the Ancient Aryan nation, corresponding to the several ascending gradations in qualities and activities. The Dharmas of all the Castes together carry on the work of the Lord, the Supreme Purusha, Who ensouls Humanity and guides it upward. Each Caste is as much important as any other. The Sudra is the busy, running workman, making his appearance in the lowest, the feet-portion, as it were, of His Divine Manifestation as Humanity; the Vaishya is the supplier and store-keeper and is the main prop and support for all (like the thighs supporting the whole body—note also the fact that the thighs are sometimes associated with desire for pleasure and that the Vaishya caste belongs to the second

stage of desire); the Kshatriya is the king and protector, representing the mighty arms of the Divine Guardian of Humanity; and the Brahmin, being the general teacher[1] and spiritual guide for all, represents His head and is said to have come out of His mouth[2]. Each

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1. अधीयीरंस्त्रयो वर्णाः स्वकर्मस्था द्विजातयः ।
प्रब्रूयाद्ब्राह्मणस्त्वेषां नेतराविति निश्चयः ॥
सर्वेषां ब्राह्मणो विद्याद्वृत्त्युपायान्यथाविधि ।
प्रब्रूयादितरेभ्यश्च स्वयं चैव तथा भवेत् ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः १०—१. २.)

2. ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद्बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ।
(पुरुषसूक्तम्)

तस्माद्ब्राह्मणोऽग्निदेवत्यो मुखवीर्यश्चेति श्रुतिस्मृतिसिद्धं । तथा बलाश्रयाभ्यां बाहुभ्यां बलभिदादिकं क्षत्रियजातिनियन्तारं क्षत्रियं च । तस्मादैन्द्रं क्षत्रं बाहुवीर्यं चेति स्मृतौ श्रुतौ चावगतम् । तथोरुत ईहाश्रयाद्वस्वादिलक्षणं विशो नियन्तारं विशं च । तस्मात्कृष्यादिपरो वस्वादिदेवत्यश्च वैश्यः । तथा पूषणं पृथ्वीदेवतां शूद्रं च पद्भ्यां परिचरणक्षममसृजेति श्रुतिस्मृतिप्रसिद्धेः ।
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा. १)

लोकानां तु विवृद्ध्यर्थं मुखबाहूरुपादतः ।
ब्राह्मणं क्षत्रियं वैश्यं शूद्रं च निरवर्तयत् ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः. १–३१.)

one of these four Castes is depending in some way or other on the other three. If any one of them should fail in the performance of any particular caste duty or Dharma, all the four suffer[1]. A nation having such well-organized Caste System may also be compared to the advanced, internally well-organized, human body. Physically speaking, all activities in the body are guided by the brain and the whole nervous system. The muscles are the actively controlling organs in the body and their varied activities protect all the other parts of the body and enable them to successfully carry on their respective functions. The Kshatriya may be compared to the muscular system and the Brahmin to the nervous system including the brain. The Vaishya's duties are performed in the body by the lungs, the stomach and the digestive organs which are the suppliers of the body with air, food and water, and manufacturers of substances used in digestion and for assimilation. The busy workman, the Sudra, is like the running blood handing over to each tissue its needs, taking away from it things not wanted by it, and in fact being of immense service to the former three. If all perform their respective duties properly, the work of the whole will go on unimpeded. All the different systems in the human

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1. सर्वस्यास्य तु सर्गस्य गुप्त्यर्थं स महाद्युतिः ।
मुखबाहूरुपज्जानां पृथक्कर्माण्यकल्पयत् ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः १. ८७)

body are equally important, fulfilling the object of one life. Such definite internal differentiations in the body make their appearance only after the body has considerably advanced in development and not before. Neither such differentiations in organism nor definiteness of separate functions are seen in the lowest orders of animal life or in the early stages of the human embryo. These facts may by analogy point out the reason, as indicated once before, why definite Caste System has not been established in nations other than the Aryan Hindu. In the body and in the nation, it is difference in functioning that marks the difference among organs or Castes as the case may be. It is the performance of function that is to be attended to. It is indeed unfortunate that, in the modern Aryan Hindu Society, Caste functions or Dharmas are not much cared for, but, show of regard alone is strenuously and improperly insisted on by people whose birth has placed them in the higher castes.

Caste System one of necessity.

14. I have heard it said that the Caste System is based upon the principle of 'Division of Labour' and that the System may be abolished or at least considerably changed as modern conditions show that the system can no more work satisfactorily in confirmity with that principle. But the fact is that the Caste System has never had any direct reference to such a

principle of 'Division of Labour' although it must be admitted that, as a result of its working, that principle also is served. Caste System is a system of necessity. This world of ours is a world of schools for the Jeevas. The Jeevas come here, join in the schools, learn a few lessons and go back for a time for assimilating the instructions gained in life here. The several nations of this world are so many schools. Each nation has its general education and its special teaching for its members. Most of the nations of the world at present are like the Madras Pial Schools where students of varying aptitude and advancement are kept together indiscriminately, each one of them being taught by the teacher separately amidst some confusion. This mode of teaching may no doubt be possible and even desirable so long as there are only a few students in the schools or so long as the students, though many, do not among themselves vary much in the extent or degree of their training and development. But, when the students have become many and their respective qualifications have become very much varied and marked, the Pial-school-system would no more work properly. Classes must of necessity be formed in the school. The qualifications of the students are noted and classified, separate classes are formed for teaching separate groups of students possessing more or less similar qualifications, and thenceforward students who come anew are admitted only into such classes as suit them for their

further training. It is this principle that underlies the establishment of the Caste System. The object of the formation of classes is to train up the students better and sooner, to avoid confusion, to give the students a definite idea of the lessons they have to learn and to give them better facilities for improvement by mutual consultations and comparing of notes with their co-students in the class, so that, they may learn better the teachings of that class. Accordingly, in the history of the Aryan Hindu nation there was a time when it was found necessary to divide the nation into classes, called Castes, so that the Jeevas who might thereafter incarnate in this nation might be directed to be born in the particular castes whose Dharmas they had to be trained in for ensuring their progress onwards. In the beginning of the cycle or Kalpa there was no Caste System proper, there then being only Brahmins. As days rolled on, there was increasing change in environments and conditions of being, and on the appearance of men possessing diverse qualifications and varying in large measure in respect of their avocations in life and their Ideals in aspiration, the necessity for the Caste System arose[1].

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1. न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत् ।
ब्रह्मणा पूर्वसृष्टं हि कर्मभिर्वर्णतां गतम् ।
....

Formation of, and Admission into, castes.

15. It is very often seen that many inquirers mistake the rules of the formation of Castes for the rules in force after their formation. Discussions arise and doubts are expressed without noting the fact that in the Aryan Sacred Books reference is sometimes made to the former set of rules and sometimes to the latter. When the Pial school is converted into a Classed School (if I may use the term) the then mental condition of the students is alone taken into consideration by the Head of the school, who effects the conversion, and not their condition as it was at the time of their joining in the school originally. But, after the classes are formed once for all, fresh students are not indiscriminately admitted into any class, but, the head of the institution admits such new students by examining them and putting them in the classes suited to them. It is the Head-master that determines the question of fitness for admission into particular classes, and the question is not for the students to consider or discuss. In the same manner, it is no doubt a fact that for the first formation of the Castes the then qualifications, Guna-Karma, of the Jeevas were alone considered irrespective of their

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इत्येतैः कर्मभिर्व्यस्ता द्विजा वर्णान्तरं गताः ।

ब्राह्मणाः प्रथमं प्रादुर्भूता ब्राह्मणेभ्यश्च शेषा वर्णाः प्रादुर्भूताः

(महाभारतम्, शां—प—१८८, ३४२)

birth[1]. But, after the actual formation of the castes, the Guiding Intelligence, Eswara, by duly considering the previous Guna-Karma of the re-incarnating Jeevas, directs them to take birth in the appropriate Castes best fitted for their further training. It is the Guna and Karma that virtually determine the birth of Jeevas in particular castes. Karma is always with body. Suffering or enjoyment which is the result of Karma is also with body. The choice of body is made by Eswara, the Supreme Administrator of the law of Karma. So, after the establishment of the Caste System, birth determines the Caste of an individual, and it is the surest test. Some seem to think that Guna, mental condition, alone is the criterion for fixing the Caste of an individual under the System. In the first place, it is a very unsafe guide. The true mental condition may not be properly ascertained. Again, different people may have different impressions about the mental condition of the same individual. The particular nature of his Guna has to be ascertained, not by direct perception, but only by way of inferences based upon the outward manifestations of such Guna. Such outward manifestations themselves may not be rightly observed and understood by the observer, or, in the same manner by different observers. It may also

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1. चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

(भगवद्गीता ४—२३)

appear that constant changes are perceived in the mental condition of the same man. If the determination of the Caste of an individual should depend upon our flickering notions of his Guna, the state of society would be most confused, no man can definitely know what Dharmas are his own to follow, and there would be no end of disagreement and discussion as regards the duties and the status of particular individuals in the nation. Further, Guna or the real mental condition of a Jeeva becomes well manifested and can possibly be observed only after the lapse of some years after the birth of the individual. But, the Aryan Shastras direct a great many purificatory and other ceremonies and initiations to be performed during these early years in the case of the Brahmin and other Dwijas. If the Caste itself of an individual has to be discovered later on, what becomes of these ceremonies and initiations and those Shastras? All these and various similar difficulties are avoided by the Supreme Lord by Himself taking up the responsibility of fixing the Caste of Jeevas by making them take birth in certain definite ways and by giving us the benefit of a sure test, the test by 'birth.'[1] But, 'birth' by itself alone

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1. सर्वेषां जन्मना जातिर्नान्यथा कर्मकोटिभिः ।
पश्वादीनां यथा जातिर्जन्मनैव न चान्यथा ॥
साऽपि स्थूलस्य देहस्य भौतिकस्य न चात्मनः ।

cannot entitle any one born in a higher Caste to claim superiority over others. Referring again to the analogy of the school, though it may be generally said that a higher class student is superior to a lower class student, the former, if he has ceased to learn his lessons properly, may from another point of view be considered inferior to the lower class student who is studying regularly according to his teacher's directions. 'Superiority' and 'inferiority' are relative terms having varying significations when considered from different points of view. It often happens that a student, after being admitted into a class, becomes indolent, does not work properly and perhaps forgets even the lessons learnt in a lower class. In the final examination for the class he may be found backward to such an

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तथाऽपि देहेऽहंमानादात्मा विप्रादिसंज्ञितः ॥

(सूतसंहिता—शि—ख. १२)

ब्राह्मण्यां ब्राह्मणाज्जातस्संस्कृतो ब्राह्मणो भवेत् ।

एवं क्षत्रियविट्छूद्राः ज्ञेयाः स्वेभ्यस्स्वयोनिजाः ॥

जन्मना ब्राह्मणो ज्ञेयः संस्कारैर्द्विज उच्यते ।

(देवलस्मृतिः)

ब्राह्मण्यां ब्राह्मणेनैव ह्युत्पन्नो ब्राह्मणः स्मृतः ।

(हारीतस्मृतिः)

सवर्णेभ्यः सवर्णासु जायन्ते हि सजातयः ।

(याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृतिः)

extent that he deserves being sent two classes down. But, so long as he is in his present class, he in fact belongs to it, though he may be always placed last in the class, and though he may subject himself to ridicule by his fellow-students and also by the students of the lower classes. In the same way, in our modern Hindu society there are people who are placed by birth in higher castes by Eswara, but who at present have shamefully degraded themselves by actions in this life, so much so, that they have brought the very Caste System into ridicule and condemnation. They will have their own final examination and the result is not difficult to guess. It must also be remembered that a student may be so hopelessly bad that the teacher is compelled to send him to a lower class even in the middle of a year's course of study. Provision is made in the Aryan Shastras for degradation in Caste in the same life. Similarly, extraordinary provisions are also made for elevation in Caste in the same life if there should be any exceptional circumstances and reasons justifying such elevation, as in the case of the great sage Visvamitra.

Advanced Jeeva in lower Caste.

16. Very often it is observed that a person born in a lower caste, for instance, a Sudra, exhibits really superior intelligence, understands much better and sooner than many born in the higher castes, posses-

ses lofty thoughts on morals and religion, and, in fact, puzzles the student of Atma-Vidya as to how it has happened that a developed Jeeva is dwelling in a Sudra body. But, the inquirer soon learns that it is not without an object Eswara has placed such developed Jeeva in such a body. A student may be studying, for instance, in the fifth class. He has come up to this class by gradual improvement after passing one examination after another. Still, he may have for sometime regularly neglected one particular subject, say, Mathematics, in which he once attained proficiency. He may be all-clever in other subjects. In the final test of the students of the class the teacher finds that this particular student, though proficient in other subjects, is extremely backward in Mathematics and has forgotten even the lessons taught in the lower classes. Then, it is found desirable and necessary that he should be for sometime sent to some lower classes to make up the deficiency, and he is sent down accordingly for re-learning that particular subject. He relearns and comes back. He is afterwards retained in the same fifth class or promoted to the sixth according to the degree of proficiency he has regained. Similarly, in the Caste System there are certain permanent lessons taught in the course of the training of Jeevas in each of the Castes. For instance, the acts of obedience, enforced in the Sudra Caste, by numberless repetitions make a permanent mark in the Jeeva in the

shape of humility and submissiveness, patience and forbearance, and regard and respect for others, necessary qualities to be preserved with care throughout the whole course of evolution of the Jeeva. Let us suppose that a Jeeva, after reaching the stage of the Brahmin, neglects and loses one after another these precious qualities, though at the same time he studies the Vedas and the Shastras and gathers a good store of information in many departments of knowledge. Eswara however sees that all his knowledge may be of real use only if he is compelled to regain the excellent qualities lost by him. For this purpose, he is sent down to take birth in the Sudra Caste for an incarnation or two in order that he may make up the deficiency. Such Jeevas in the Sudra Caste we very frequently meet. The only way of their fulfilling the object of their being reborn in the Sudra Caste is by following closely the Dharmas, duties, of that Caste. [1] They have to relearn the lessons of obedience, regain their lost qualities and ascend again to their own level.

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1. श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

(भगवद्गीता. ३—३५)

येनास्य पितरो याताः येन याताः पितामहाः ।
तेन यायात्सतां मार्गं तेन गच्छन्न रिष्यति ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः ४. १७८)

If, instead of doing so, they, being proud of their learning neglect their caste-Dharmas and would not relearn their old lessons, though a splendid opportunity has been given them, the Headmaster, Eswara, knows best how to deal with such a refractory pupil-Jeeva. If however the Jeeva in the Sudra body should realise that he has come into his present caste to follow, and profit by the benefit of, the Dharmas or duties enjoined on the members of the caste, and that to follow them is his merit and in no way derogatory to him, he will soon rise above his temporary fallen condition and be again placed among his fellow-students in the advanced class. Any one who has studied the lives of Thuladhara, Dharma Vyadha, Nunda and Vidhura will easily appreciate this truth.

17. It is also very often seen that in the Brahmin Caste a Jeeva is born under such circumstances and

Life of degradation in the highest Caste.

within such environments that he has to be brought up in a manner thoroughly inconsistent with real Brahmin life. The parents may be addicted to vice and devoid of all observance of Caste-Dharmas. Their friends and relations who frequent them may be equally bad. The child is brought up by such parents. Sometimes, it may happen that even during infancy the child is led into some vices. The child grows, attains boyhood, vices are confirmed, very often multiplied too. Manhood is reached and the man leads his life in

shame and degradation. Even if he grasps some ideas of higher and nobler life, he finds it almost impossible to get out of the influences of the accumulated force of his long-contracted habits. The question is:—'Could such a Jeeva have been a developed Jeeva entitled to inhabit a Brahmin body? If it was, what purpose is served by compelling the Jeeva to take birth under circumstances, not only most unfavourable to progress onwards but tending positively to drag him downwards?' The answer is this. Let us take the analogy of the school again. Every good teacher tries his best to educate his students up to the limit of proficiency fixed for his class by retaining the students in his class as long as it is necessary and desirable. Every student is given proper facilities to get through his lessons. Such of the students as neglect and misuse their opportunities of improvement are then and there moderately punished, and they are taught, in the beginning, in all mild ways, the value of such opportunities. If, notwithstanding such mild and wholesome teaching, the student goes on neglecting and misusing further opportunities, the teacher makes him undergo appropriate punishment for the misuse or actual misbehaviour and practically teaches him about the evil of neglecting opportunities by compelling him to work hard under difficulties brought about by such misbehaviour. With opportunities lessened, having work rendered heavier, and with self-created obstacles on all

sides, the student is made to feel keenly for the waste and the misuse of his previous opportunities. If the student under such circumstances really regrets his mistake and tries to make the best use of the little opportunity he may have for the bettering of his condition, the teacher begins to help him and the energy of his resolution itself enables him to work through difficulties and obstacles, and the result is that he not only learns the value of opportunities but also gathers strength and courage by successfully working against opposing forces. But, many students are not able to stand this hard test. They grow desperate and become worse. Then, the teacher, finding his last trial failing, sees that there is no more use in retaining such students in his class and that they ought to be, of necessity, sent to a lower class, so that they may have better and ampler opportunities of learning their old lessons. Similarly, the Jeeva referred to above was a Brahmin in his previous life or lives, but lost many an opportunity for improvement, associated then with objectionable characters, contracted bad habits, and did all whose result is his present position. It is indeed a pity that he should have so many difficulties to encounter. But he is the author of them all. When opportunity he had, he would not use it properly. Its consequence is that, although he may now want to improve, obstacles are before him and proper opportunities very rarely appear. He sometimes very earnestly

wants to give up his bad habits, but they would not leave him. If he is to improve at all, he has to do so by the side of such habits, and it is indeed a difficult task. His people around him and his other environments are all against his redemption, and even if he should strive to rise, and to some extent succeed in rising, above his acquired instincts while in solitude, such people and environments drag him down again while in their company, and he once more revels in shame. But, if such attempts for escape are repeated very often, he will gather strength more and more, and he may have a very fair hope of raising himself up early to the standard level of his caste-Dharma, without any more fear of descent into sin. Such a last chance is offered to the Jeeva in question. If this last chance is not availed of, the Jeeva is bound to go down to a lower caste in which he may take his own time to get rid of his dross and to relearn and regain all that he has forgotten and lost.

Work of destruction at the end of Dwapara Yuga.

18. The above instances show that non-conformity with Caste-Dharmas leads to results which evidence immense difficulties and confusion in the proper working of the Caste System. The great use of the System can be wholly realised only if its rules are enforced by the intervention of the Authority in Power whenever necessary. If however

such Authority does not care for the System, the inevitable result is that ideas of duties become confused, qualifications and training necessary for particular acts not being insisted upon, acts fail to bear the intended fruits, dissatisfaction and scepticism set in, blame is ignorantly thrown on the head of the One who originally established the System, prejudices arise against the same, and the very nature of the System is misunderstood and misrepresented. The cloud of ignorance gets thicker, and the so-called leaders and their followers,[1] both equally groping in the dark, fall into the depths of worldliness and irreligion, beyond all hopes of early redemption. Such was the fate apprehended at the end of the last or Dwapara Yuga by Arjuna when he was asked by Lord Sri Krishna to fight the great men of the Kshatriya Caste and kill them. It was the Kshatriya that was the Power in Authority in the times of old in this land, that kept up the Caste System in working order, though latterly the System exhibited symptoms of slight internal corruption. Arjuna had the keenness to see, though from a somewhat different point of view, that, if that Power should be cut down, Caste-confusion would set in, sins would be multiplied, and the progress of the nation

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1. अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ।

(काठकोपनिषत् २)

would be considerably checked. It may be observed that this particular fear of Arjuna about the nature of future events was not referred to by Lord Sri Krishna in the whole of the Bhagavadgita in a manner to show that Arjuna was wrong in his apprehension. But, the Lord induced him to fight by teaching him that he ought not to care for the results of his actions, that it was his duty as Kshatriya to fight in a righteous cause, that birth and death have no reference to the Reality in man, the Self, and that the Self is ever existing in the infinity of consciousness and bliss. So, Lord Sri Krishna evidently knowing the inevitable results, expedited the great Maha-Bharata war which ended in completely demolishing the Kshatriya wall of protection around the Hindu Aryan Nation, and which has brought the great ancient fabric of Caste System to its present deplorable condition. The ways of the Lord are not always known, but a purpose there must be at the bottom of all this change. Let us try to ascertain what this possibly can be.

The Four Yugas and Caste System.

19. Our ancient Sages have discovered that different periods of the day (of 24 hours) have different peculiarities and each of such periods is especially suited to the performance of some specific kinds of duties or actions. The early morning period of the day, preceding sun-rise, is the fittest for calm

contemplation (Dhyana) on the nature of the Absolute Self and for austere devotion (Tapas) to the Supreme. The fore-part of the day is the best for the acquisition of knowledge (Gnanam) after purification by active worship (Puja) of Eswara. The rest of the day time is to be spent in service in the shape of sacrifice (Yagna) or offerings to other Jeevas, whether of this world or of any other, and for the acquisition of property for immediate use in this life. The night is the period for enjoyment of life and sleep. It is also the period when suffering is most keenly felt. Giving (Dana) of food when demanded is always compulsory, especially in the night. This day of ours (of 24 hours) is, as it were, an inverted miniature image of the Great Cycle of Time, the period of Mahayuga, which consists of 4,380,000 years, and which is apportioned into four smaller Cycles or Yugas, namely Kritha of 1,752,000 years, Thretha of 1,314,000 years, Dwapara of 876,000 years and Kali of 438,000 years,[1] inverted, because, the

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1. मनुः—दैवे रात्र्यहनीवर्षे......चत्वार्याहुः सहस्राणि वर्षा-णां तु कृतं युगम् । तस्य तावच्छतीसंख्या संध्यांशश्च तथा-विधः ।......इतरेषु ससंध्येषु ससंध्यांशेषु च त्रिषु । एका-पायेन वर्तन्ते सहस्राणि शतानि च ।....................
पराशरः—कृतं त्रेता द्वापरश्च कलिश्चेति चतुर्युगम् । दिव्यै-र्वर्षसहस्रैस्तु तद्द्वादशभिरुच्यते । (वै—स्मृ—मु—व.)

length of duration of each of these Yugas which correspond to the divisions of the day bears more or less an inverse proportion, Kali being the smallest of the Yugas, and Kritha or Satya being the largest. Kritha Yuga corresponds to the early morning period of the day. It is the Yuga most favourable for contemplation (Dhyana) and austere devotion (Tapas). It is the period in which advanced Jeevas, who have risen above the lower stages of action, and who are treading along the final path of renunciation and contemplation, are awake and functioning. It is also the period in which advanced Jeevas take birth in the four Castes and regularly perform their respective duties for the common good of all. The less developed Jeevas are then either sleeping in Maya without being brought into manifestation or activity, or undergoing experiences, being elsewhere or in sub-human bodies. It is generally known that Brahmins who are spiritually inclined rise in the early morning, about two hours before sunrise, and, after cleaning and purifying their bodies, contemplate on the Self, the Source of Light in all. It is also the time when those who are mindful of their duties rise up and work. This early morning period, it may also be said, is just the time which other people find to be the best fitted for sound sleep. When the morning hours are over and the heat of the Sun begins to spread in the atmosphere, all men are awake and the world goes

on busy all over. People of different stages of advancement, high and low, of different temperaments, of different types of living, and of different avocations, all are there in the work of the world. Such a state of things arises when the second period, Thretha Yuga, begins. This Thretha Yuga (to which corresponds the forepart of the day) is best suited for acquisition of Knowledge or Gnana and active worship (Upasana) of Eswara. The third Yuga, Dwapara, as is the remaining portion of the day-time, is most favourable, and afford proper facilities, for acts of Sacrifice.[1] Then comes the last period, our present Kali Yuga, the Yuga in which Gift (Danam) is most efficacious, the great night portion of Chathur-Yuga or Maha-Yuga, when all the Dark Powers of evil are busy in their errands of mischief and all the distinctions between man and man perceived in the day are vanishing.[2] The learned and the illiterate, the king and the peasant, all act alike in the night. They eat, enjoy and suffer, and

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1. तपः परं कृतयुगे त्रेतायां ज्ञानमुच्यते ।
द्वापरे यज्ञमेवाहुर्दानमेकं कलौ युगे ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः १—८६. पराशरसंहिता. १—२३)

2. त्रिभिरंशैरधर्मस्तु लोकानाक्रम्य तिष्ठति ।
तामसं युगमासाद्य तदा भरतसत्तम ॥
(महाभारतम् व—प—१९०)

go to sleep. The vast gulfs of difference, perceived among them in the course of the discharge of their duties in the day, are all covered in the night by uniformity of conduct. When the present night Kali was about to come, Eswara made preparations by means of the Mahabharata war and other events to facilitate the obliteration, one after another, of all distinctions of Caste-Dharmas of the previous Yugas. This process of obliteration is going on day by day with increased vigour, and the work of Kali for the past over 5,000 years on Caste System has brought it to its present tottering conditon. Every one of the students of Atma-Vidya knows that the inevitable levelling of Castes must happen, as apprehended with great sorrow by Arjuna, when the night Kali advances further on and that the time must of necessity arrive when all will have their sound sleep of ignorance.

Caste Dharmas to be followed in Kaliyuga

20. My object in showing, as I have attempted to do, that the Caste System is a system of nature and necessity and that each of the members of the Aryan Hindu community ought to follow in practice the Dharmas of the Caste in which he is born, is not to advocate any attempt at a whole-sale revival of the ancient Caste System in all its purity, for, such a revival is absolutely impossible in this Yuga, and the System itself is going to be involved in hopeless confusion, every one being a Sudra in conduct, as the great

Sage, Vyasa, has himself declared[1], but my object is to convince my fellow-students that the system is a wonderfully desirable one, unlike what it is described to be by people who are not competent to judge of it and who are blinded by ignorance and perverted by prejudices, and that it is possible and necessary for some advanced individual Jeevas here and there to use that System to the best advantage even in this Kali-Yuga. It may be that in the night the generality of mankind may be inactive and asleep. But, persons who want to rise above the common run of people of the time and to make rapid advances on the path of evolution ought to take special pains to see that they do not really bring themselves down to the level of the ordinary man of the time, by recognising the fact that, although the gulfs of caste distinctions may be filled up in this Age, the vast expanse of space-intervals in the place of the former gulfs may still be perceived

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1. ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रिया वैश्याः संकीर्यन्तः परस्परम् ।
शूद्रतुल्या भविष्यन्ति तपः सत्यविवर्जिताः ।
स्वभावात्क्रूरकर्माणश्चान्योन्यमभिशङ्किनः ।
भवितारो नराः सर्वे संप्राप्ते युगसङ्क्षये ।

(महाभारतम् व—१९०)

वर्णाश्रमाचारवती प्रवृत्तिर्न कलौ नृणाम् ।

(विष्णुपुराणम् ६—१—१०)

and conduct may be guided accordingly. Although the manifold differences in status and capabilities between man and man perceivable during the day cannot in the night be discovered by a casual visitor, still, such differences are preserved in a latent form during the night, and it cannot be said they have ceased to exist then. Though at the time of sleep in the night the Judge and the prisoner appear alike, the status of neither of them becomes that of the other, even temporarily, although the difference between them is not made out then but only during the court hours of the day, the Judge sitting on the bench and pronouncing sentences, and the prisoner standing in the dock and receiving punishment. So, although the Caste-duties are not actually performed in the present Yuga, the hidden foundation of the system is still preserved, as also the respective status of Jeevas by birth in the different Caste-sections of the community[1]. The wise man is he who acts out his life even in this Yuga in conformity with his Caste-status pushing aside all obstacles created by the circumstances of the Age. He ought to realise that his future depends on the nature of his present. The judgeship of the Judge may be withdrawn from

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1. युगे यगे च ये धर्मास्तत्र तत्र च ये द्विजाः ।
तेषां निन्दा न कर्तव्या युगरूपा हि ते द्विजाः ॥
(पराशरसंहिता १–३३)

him on the morrow if the Judge should so conduct himself in the night that it is no more safe to continue the judgeship in him. So, even in this Kali-Yuga we should strive to conduct ourselves in a way at least not inconsistent with our Dharmas.

Some more reasons.

21. The very obstacles in these our days to regular practice in Caste-Dharmas are a source of strength to the practitioner (every one knows that resistence increases strength) and the present Age (Kali) may also be considered as a period of test, when Jeevas who were discharging their respective duties in other Yugas have been placed under difficulties for testing whether their faith in their Dharmas has become strong and unshakable. Let us stand firm by our Dharmas and prove that we are competent enough to be admitted into the higher path, the path of calm contemplation. No doubt, we are in Kali-Yuga, and many of us are busy preparing for an early sleep of ignorance. Still, there may be a few among ourselves who may use even this night of ours to the best advantage by purifying themselves by proper observance of their Dharmas, and by sitting in contemplation on the Self just when other men lay themselves down on bed for sleep. It may be remembered that the Aryan Shastras direct that the Seeker of the Self, instead of throwing himself on bed with the idea of sleeping ought to sit on it and try to practise such contemplation until sleep overtakes him by force.

Such attempts at contemplation may hurry on the Jeeva to the attainment of final liberation even before the end of Kali, nay, even in his present life-time itself if they are sufficiently hearty and well-guided.

Now or never.

22. It may perhaps be asked :—" Where is the necessity to hurry on now ? Time is infinite. We may take our own time, according to our convenience and leisure to purify and improve ourselves by the adoption in conduct of appropriate Dharmas. We need not much trouble ourselves now, and we shall at present take life easily, eat, drink and be merry." This view, no doubt, sounds very well, so long as the real state of things is not known. The fact, however, is this. As we are at present situated, the sooner we make attempts in the right direction the better it is for us. One moment of delay creates and places before us more obstacles in the way of our progress. As Kali Yuga advances, even the few opportunities for improvement that we have got now will be taken away from us, one after another. The advantage of physical heredity becomes less and less as generations are more and more removed from the great sagely ancestors, habits and environments become worse, means of liberation get scanty, temptations in the way are multiplied, the guides for proper training become fewer, struggle for even the bare existence of life becomes keener,

occasions, in the midst of such struggle, for attempts at spiritual progress become rarer, the bodies, physical and mental, become weaker; in short, the whole of nature, internal and external, will seem to conspire against the aspirant and the result will be his thorough vanquishment.[1] Our present chances for escape are better and more numerous when compared to the future ones. If now and here we are not able to save ourselves, there is no room for hope in the future.[2] It is

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1. त्रिभिरंशैरधर्मस्तु लोकानाक्रम्य तिष्ठति ।
आयुर्वीर्यमथो बुद्धिर्बलं तेजश्च पाण्डव ।
मनुष्याणामनुयुगं ह्रसतीति निबोध मे ।
(महाभारतम् व–प–१९०)

जितो धर्मो ह्यधर्मेण सत्यं चैवानृतेन च ।
जिताश्चोरैस्तु राजानः स्त्रीभिश्च पुरुषाः कलौ ॥
सीदन्ति चाग्निहोत्राणि गुरुपूजा प्रणश्यति ।
कुमार्यश्च प्रसूयन्ते तस्मिन्कलियुगे सदा ॥
(पराशरस्मृतिः आ–का–१. ३०–३१)

2. इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः ।
(केनोपनिषत्—२)

इह चेदशकद्बोद्धुं प्राक् शरीरस्य विस्रसः ।
ततः सर्गेषु लोकेषु शरीरत्वाय कल्पते ॥
(काठकोपनिषत्—६)

इहैव सन्तोऽथ विद्मस्तद्वयं न चेदवेदिर्महती विनष्टिः ।
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्—४)

no doubt very difficult to shake off one's lethargy. Most of us have been sleeping and lying idle already too long. But the past we cannot recall and mend. The future, however, is in our hands. It seems certain that we cannot afford to sit idle any more. Kali seems to have begun in right earnest his work of destruction. The house has already caught fire in the roof-top. We should gather together the little energies we have still got and try to escape at once.[1] People, highly esteemed for modern culture and largely applauded for wordly wisdom, may, without looking up, deter and delay us by their sweet words of fascinating eloquence[2], but we should not mind all that. We should heartily and strenuously engage ourselves in the due performance of our respective Caste-duties, and, after we have thereby secured real Vairagya or spirit of renunciation and begun to feel the scorching heat of Samsara, it

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1. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो न च प्रमादात् ।

(मुण्डकोपनिषत्—३)

2. अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितंमन्यमानाः ।
दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढाः ।

(काठकोपनिषत् २)

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।

(मुण्डकोपनिषत् १.)

will be our interest and duty to run away immediately[1]. A vast number may remain and perish in the flame of Kali-Yuga, but that is no excuse for our not making special attempts to escape. It is for the benefit of those who may be ready and willing to make such special attempts these humble discourses are intended.

Caste-Dharmas and Mala-dosha.

23. Again, as shown in a previous discourse, the final object of all our education is to get rid of Avidya by means of Para-Vidya or Gnana (true knowledge). This true knowledge arises and is assured only by renunciation and by constant contemplation on the nature of the One Self under proper guidance. If we want to get out of the mischief of Avidya, we should strenously practise contemplation and renunciation. In order that such practice may be established, we should remove beforehand from our acquired nature all the impurities (Doshas) or gross elements of obstruction by strict observance of our Dharmas. Impurities in our nature are mainly of three classes. They are Mala-dosha, Vikshepa-dosha and Avarana-dosha. Mala-dosha is generally the impurity caused by our bad Karma done in previous lives. This impurity can be removed by the due following of Caste-Dharmas or

1. यदहरेव विरजेत्तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् ।

(जाबालोपनिषत्)

duties, which include acts of help to other Jeevas, whether of this world, or of Bhuvarloka such as Pitris, or of Swarloka as Devas. Vikshepa-dosha in the Jeeva is that which makes his mind ever waver without allowing him to stand firm in the Truth taught or revealed to him. This defect can be removed by unswerving concentrated devotion (Upasana). Avarana-dosha is the inherent veil of ignorance (Avidya) which blinds him and prevents his realising in consciousness his one-ness with the All-Self. This can be removed only by Gnana or knowledge of the Truth of Absolute Monism. Caste-duties are specifically prescribed for getting rid of Mala-dosha which is the grossest of the Doshas and which is a positive evil brought on one's own nature by antecedent misconduct; and this specific prescription is a chief peculiarity of the Aryan practical religion. The necessity for following strictly the caste-duties so prescribed is not always rightly and fully understood. Some modern thinkers believe that these duties need not necessarily be performed by all, that these duties are intended only to give a training in the life of virtue, and that for the one who is already leading a life of common virtue the performance of such special duties is unnecessary. In the first place, the view entertained by such thinkers is both partial and incorrect. Even taking the view as it is, the question arises how far the mere following, in daily life, of the ordinary and general rules of common

morality alone can nullify the effect of a previous positively bad Karma. It has been pointed out elsewhere that no man there is or can be who has not his own store of past bad Karma, and man, as such, is himself the result,in a sense,of mixed Karma,good and bad. One who is hale and healthy can remain healthy in future by observing merely the ordinary hygienic rules of life. But the one who is affected by some disease has to see something more done by way of special treatment. The system of training in the performance of caste-duties is a system of special treatment established by the All-knowing for, among other reasons, the eradication of the evils of past bad Karma, evils which otherwise hinder the onward progress of the Jeeva towards his final goal. Bad Karmas being many and varied, their effect Mala-dosha is also of innumerable kinds, and the duties or Dharmas to be followed by men have had also to be classified and prescribed differently. Eswara, by making us take birth in particular castes, has placed us in a position to know what kind of Mala-dosha we have got and what the specific Dharmas are by the performance of which we may get rid of the dross in us. Some of these Dharmas, such as Sandhyavandana, are so very carefully prescribed that they not only lead directly to the removal of Mala-dosha by training us in the acts of good Karma, but also simultaneously prepare us to rise beyond the two other Doshas also by training us in concentrated Upasana and enabling us

to advance towards the goal of Gnana-Marga also. Those who have cared to ascertain what Sandhya-vandana means know this fact well. These Dharmas, as indeed all responsible actions, have to be performed by us only in earth-life, that is to say, in the plane of Karma or activity. The path of action, particularly its higher section, and the path of Upasana, though different in their nature, are for all practical purposes so much interwoven with each other that they have to be trodden more or less together. Upasana is possible only so long as the difference is recognised among these three, the devotee (Upasakah), the object of devotion (Upasyah) and their connecting element devotion; and so long also subsists the idea of a distinction among the corresponding three, the actor, the thing acted upon and the action. In fact, the path of Upasana and the higher section of the path of action are practically one. Thus the path of Upasana also has to be gone through only in earth-life. Even the path of Gnana or knowledge, which is characterised by renunciation, has to be trodden only here (in earth-life), for renunciation of activity there can be only where activity is possible. Gnana-Sadhanas (means of attaining knowledge) have all to be practised here. The seeking and the serving of the Guru, the strict following of the directions of the Guru, such as the subduing of the senses, and the consequent realisation of the unreal nature of phenomenal

existence have all to be made only here, the plane of activity, the plane where the phenomenalising of the Noumenon is most material. In short, taking into consideration all that the word "Gnana"[1] connotes and implies, the fact seems clear that the path of Gnana has also to be gone through only in earth-life. [It is for these reasons in particular it has been said in the previous discourse that man can bring about his progress or evolution only in earth-life and that in other Lokas there is no evolution for him. The Great Ones refer, in this connection, to the possibility of Upasana in the higher Lokas in some exceptional cases. These are however rare exceptions which only prove the rule. Sruthi makes reference also to the advanced Souls who are enabled to function in Satya-loka and are to attain Moksha from there at the end of the Cycle. The case of such Souls has very little to do with the general course of evolution of the thinker]. Thus, we find that we should strive to make the best use of our life on earth, which practically is the only training ground, with a view to remove from ourselves our bad nature which overhangs our real nature, ever pure, blissful

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1. ज्ञानमितिच ।
देहेन्द्रियनिग्रहसद्गुरूपासनश्रवणमनननिदिध्यासनैर्यद्यद्दृग्दृश्य-स्वरूपं सर्वान्तरस्थं सर्वसमं घटपटादिपदार्थमिवाविकारं विकारेषु चैतन्यं विना किंचिन्नास्तीति साक्षात्कारानुभवज्ञानम् । (निरालम्बोपनिषत्)

and peaceful. We cannot afford to neglect our Caste-dharmas which, after directly removing the grossest of our impurities, enable us to rise swiftly on to our own lofty state of the All-Self.

Asramas.

24. As in the case of a nation or class, so in the life of an individual also, we can trace the several stages of evolution. In the case of an ordinary man with little spiritual development, his whole life is spent on the first and the second paths, the paths of obedience and selfish desire. In a spiritually advanced person we may be able to trace the signs of his passage not only through the first and the second but also through the final paths, the paths of selfless action and absolute renunciation. The Great One accordingly divided the life-period of the Brahmin, the most highly evolved among men, into four distinct stages or Asramas. Here naturally a doubt may arise such as the following:— If the Brahmin is intended for the final path, the path of renunciation, how can it be possible for us to trace in his life-period his passage through the lower paths, which passage must have been over in his previous lives, as the life of the Brahmin must be the life of renunciation from its beginning to its end? In fact, no such doubt need arise at all. When it is said that the Brahmin is intended for the path of renunciation, it means that his immediate goal is the end of that

particular path. The end of Kshatriya life is to successfully do actions without personal motives and for the good of others, and so on. It is the difference in the nature of the goal ordinarily reachable in particular lives that makes the distinction among the castes. The beginning is the same for all, and the end differs for each caste. The Sudra life begins and ends in obedience or service. Though his whole life-period is spent in service, he is allowed to be a householder. The Vaishya life begins in obedience and ends in action for profit. He has two Asramas, the Brahmacharyasrama, the stage of the student, and the Grihasthhasrama, that of the householder. The Kshatriya life begins also in obedience, passes through the second stage and ends in selfless action. He has three Asramas, the Brahmacharya, the Garhasthhya and the Vanaprasthhasrama, the stage of training in austerity and devotion in solitude in the forest. The Brahmin life in the same way begins in obedience, passes through all the other three stages, and ends in final emancipation from conditioned existence, the fruit of Renunciation Absolute; that is to say, he has all the four Asramas, including the final one, the Sanyasasrama, the stage of thorough renunciation.[1] Some of

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1. चत्वारो ब्राह्मणस्योक्ता आश्रमाः श्रुतिचोदिताः ।
क्षात्रियस्य त्रयः प्रोक्ता द्वावेको वैश्यशूद्रयोः ।
(योगियाज्ञवल्क्यस्मृतिः १—२८.)

us may be aware of the fact of nature that, as regards the growth and development of the human body within the mother's womb, all the several stages of physical growth from the condition of the cell up to that of the complicated human body are passed through before the human child comes out of the womb. When the physical body of man has to start afresh from the lowest condition, it is nothing strange that the mental frame of the real Brahmin also starts from the stage of ignorance but grows swiftly on to the stage of conscious renunciation. And this peculiar fact of nature repeating itself in the life-period of every living thing has been recognized by the Western scientists. Hence, it is possible to mark the several stages respectively in the life-period of the Brahmin having reference to the four ascertained paths of evolution. The Brahmacharya-srama or the student's stage is the first. In that stage of life, the student should be obedient to the teacher, and, as Prof. F. Max Muller would say, "the pupil is a passive recipient, a learner and believer." In the

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चत्वार आश्रमाश्चैते ब्राह्मणस्य प्रकीर्तिताः ।
गार्हस्थ्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं च वानप्रस्थं त्रयोऽऽश्रमाः ।
क्षत्रियस्यापि कथिता य आचारा द्विजस्य हि ।
ब्रह्मचर्यं च गार्हस्थ्यमाश्रमद्वितयं विशः ॥

गार्हस्थ्यमुचितं त्वेकं शूद्रस्य परिकीर्तितम् ।

(वामनपुराणम् १४—१६—१८.)

second stage, the Grihasthhasrama, the selfish action of the less evolved is represented by the action of the householder for the benefit of his wife and children. In that stage itself the Grihasthha makes preparation for the higher life and begins to cultivate therein the habit of doing action for the benefit of all, action for the mere sake of duty, which habit successfully takes him on to the third stage, the stage of Vanaprasthha. It is in thes tage of Vanaprasthha attachment to fruits of action is wholly got rid of. The Jeeva has to retire from the bustle of the world and to meditate and confer the benefit of meditation on others. He has to exercise self-control, control of body and mind. He has to help and to teach, not expecting or caring for any return of benefit, but with a view to see the world better off for his existence. When he is in this stage of life, he has to prepare himself for a still higher life by constant study of the Sacred Upanishats. Such preparation, when completed, takes him on to the last and most glorious Asrama, the Sanyasa, going thereto, he renounces all that is finite or limited, and, realising fully his oneness with the Infinite Noumenon, the underlying Reality of all that exist, finds peace unruffled and absolute.[1] Here is the object of individual existence attained. (In this connection it may be

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1. एतैरुपायैर्यतते यस्तु विद्वांस्तस्यैष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम ।
(मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३.)

mentioned that Smritis have declared that this final Asrama of Sanyasa, at the end of which alone absolute liberation is ordinarily attained, cannot be adopted in this Age of Kali, except in the beginning period of the Yuga during which the existence of the Vedas and of the Systems of Castes and Asramas continues to be recognized.[1] Now, Castes and Asramas are already becoming so much confused and deformed that it is certain that they will very soon disappear altogether, depriving Jeevas of the benefit of proper training in the glorious Asrama of absolute renunciation. If at all we care to reach the Ultimate Goal of life, we should at once, without any more waste of time, prepare ourselves for securing the necessary qualifications that may fit us to enter into such final and lofty condition of life, before Varnasrama Dharmas become thoroughly extinct and before we become completely blinded by the fast approaching, all-covering and impenetrable darkness of ignorance characteristic of Kali, the night period of the Great Maha-Yuga).

25. Thus, it is seen that according to the rules of the Caste System the ultimate goal of existence, the

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1. ...सन्यासं......कलौ...विवर्जयेत् ।
यावद्वर्णविभागोऽस्ति यावद्वेदः प्रवर्तते ।
तावन्न्यासोऽग्निहोत्रं च कर्तव्यं च कलौ युगे ॥
(व्यासः)

Sanyasasrama for the Brahmin alone.

attainment of the supreme end, the actual realisation of the One Self, Brahma-Gnanam, is in the usual course of things possible only at the end of the final Asrama of real Brahmin life, the Sanyasa.[1] It is the specific characteristic of the life of the Brahmin, to whom alone[2] the Sanyasa Asrama is allowed and prescribed, that it leads immediately and directly to the supreme knowledge of the Self. This peculiar characteristic which differentiates the Brahmin Caste

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1. उत्पत्तिरेव विप्रस्य मूर्तिर्धर्मस्य शाश्वती ।
स हि धर्मार्थमुत्पन्नो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥

यथोक्तान्यपि कर्माणि परिहाय द्विजोत्तमः ।
आत्मज्ञाने शमे च स्याद्वेदाभ्यासे च यत्नवान् ॥

एतद्धि जन्म साफल्यं ब्राह्मणस्य विशेषतः ।
प्राप्यैतत्कृतकृत्यो हि द्विजो भवति नान्यथा ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः १—९८, १२—९२, ९३.)

असौ धर्मार्थं जातः धर्मानुग्रहीतात्मज्ञानेन मोक्षाय संपद्यते ।

(कु—भ—व्या)

2. अस्मिंश्चैवाश्रमे (सन्यासे) ब्राह्मणस्यैवाधिकारः । आत्मन्यग्निं समारोप्य ब्राह्मणः प्रव्रजेद्गृहात् । एष वोऽभिहितो धर्मो ब्राह्मणस्य चतुर्विध इति । उपक्रमोपसंहाराभ्यां मनुना ब्राह्मणस्यैवाधिकारप्रतिपादनात् ब्राह्मणाः प्रव्रजन्तीति श्रुतेश्चाग्रजन्मन एवाधिकारः न द्विजातिमात्रस्य ।

(वै—स्मृ—मु—व, विज्ञानेश्वरः.)

from other castes which cannot approach the stage of Sanyasa is referred to in some passages in Agama, as in Vajra Suchika Upanishat and other works. Some of these passages, with a view to give due prominence to this connoting peculiar feature, define the very term "Brahmin" by saying "Brahmin is Brahmagnani."

"Brahmin" and "Brahmagnani."

26. Such passages, without being properly approached and understood, have given room to some discussion in modern India. People, who are averse to recognize the desirability of the Caste System, want to make a point out of such passages by saying that only Brahmagnanis can be Brahmins and none else. Such interpretation discloses the immense depth of ignorance that lies beneath it. Such interpreters seem never to have known that, if their interpretation should be the proper one, that is to say, if only Brahmagnanis can be considered Brahmins, the whole lot of Aryan Shastras, prescribing different rules for different castes, may seem useless and even ridiculous. Caste and Asrama have reference only to the body.[1] From the

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1. वर्णाश्रमादयो देहे मायया परिकल्पिताः ।

(सूतसंहिता–मु-ख-५.)

ब्राह्मण्यं कुलगोत्रे च नाम सौन्दर्यजातयः ।
स्थूलदेहगता एते ... ... ।

(आत्मबोधोपनिषत्)

moment of the parents' union and the consequent conception in the mother's womb up to death, and even after, a number of Samskaras, purificatory ceremonies and initiations, are prescribed by the Shastras for the Brahmin and other Dwijas (twice-born).[1] Does a Brahmagnani require any purification or initiation? Is it for a Brahmagnani also the ceremonies of Garbhadhana, Jatakarana, Namakarana, Annaprasana and Chowla are intended? The Shastras make provisions, differing according to the Caste, with regard to the age[2] before which and the season[3] in which Upanayanam or initia-

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1. गर्भाधानमृतौ पुंसः सवनं स्पन्दनात्पुरा ।
षष्ठेऽष्टमे वा सीमन्तो मास्येते जातकर्म च ॥
अहन्येकादशे नाम चतुर्थे मासि निष्क्रमः ।
षष्ठेऽन्नप्राशनं मासि चूडा कार्या यथा कुलम् ॥
(याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृतिः १—११, १२.)

वैदिकैःकर्मभिः पुण्यैर्निषेकादिर्द्विजन्मनाम् ।
कार्यः शरीरसंस्कारः पावनः प्रेत्य चेह च ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः २—२६)

2. आषोडशाद्ब्राह्मणस्य सावित्री नातिवर्तते ।
आद्वाविंशात्क्षत्रबन्धोराचतुर्विंशतेर्विशः ॥
(मनुस्मृति. २—३८)

3. वसन्ते ब्राह्मणमुपनयीत ग्रीष्मे हेमन्ते वा राजन्यं शरदि वैश्यं वर्षासु रथकारं शिशिरे वा सर्वान् । (भरद्वाजः)
ऋतुर्वसन्तश्शुभदोऽग्रजन्मनां ग्रीष्मो नृपाणां च शरद्विशां च । (स्मृतिचन्द्रिका)

tion into Gayatri has to be made of the boys of the first three castes. Then the question arises—Who is the Brahmin boy to be so initiated? Is it a Brahmagnani boy? Does a Brahmagnani, who has already realised the ultimate goal, the Self, require any initiation into Gayatri? Again, provisions are also made for several Prayaschittas or expiatory ceremonies for sins committed by Brahmins. If Brahmagnani alone is Brahmin, it follows that Brahmagnani also may commit and be answerable for sins. The absurdity of the view of such interpreters is most patent, and much need not be said by way of its refutation. The passages in Vajra-Suchika and similar passages elsewhere only indicate that the goal of Brahmin life is the very ultimate goal of existence, the end of evolution, while the training of Jeevas in the lower castes only places them at different intermediate stations in the ascending line of evolution, and that a Brahmin who has become a Brahmagnani is the best among Brahmins, he having actually realised the final object of Brahmin life.[1]

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1. भूतानां प्राणिनः श्रेष्ठाः प्राणिनां बुद्धिजीविनः ।
बुद्धिमत्सु नराः श्रेष्ठाः नरेषु ब्राह्मणाः स्मृताः ॥
ब्राह्मणेषु च विद्वांसो विद्वत्सु कृतबुद्धयः ।
कृतबुद्धिषु कर्तारः कर्तृषु ब्रह्मवेदिनः ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः १—९६, ९७)

The modern ways.

27. However, as matters stand at present, the ultimate goal is far away from the present position of the average modern Brahmin. His movements are all in the wrong direction, namely, downwards. The greater the descent, the swifter is his fall and more serious and permanent is his injury. He however carries with him some faint ideas of the Supreme Goal of life without being in a position to understand it properly, and sometimes earnestly wants to reach it, not knowing that he is all the while running the other way. The more he runs away from the goal, the fainter and more illusive become his ideas of it. These ideas he transmits to others and the result is:—all are deceived, as in the case of the blind leading the blind[1]. Modern India presents a curious state of affairs. The cloud of irreligion and ignorance is hovering in her atmosphere. Still, everyone talks of the Highest Truth in religion, and also wants at once to get at the Final State of Moksha or Absolute Liberation from conditioned existence[2]. Nothing less than Moksha is man's aim now. The lower he falls the higher he wants to soar.

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1. अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः । (काठकोपनिषत्. २)

2. सर्वे ब्रह्म वदिष्यन्ति संप्राप्ते तु कलौ युगे ।
नानुतिष्ठन्ति मैत्रेय शिश्नोदरपरायणाः ॥
(विष्णुपुराणम्—पराशरमैत्रेयसंवादे)

He forgets altogether that the very Shastras which deal with the state of liberation deal also with Caste and other duties, Varnasrama Dharmas. But, the modern *educated* Hindu finds the latter personally very inconvenient and gives them up. He would not however admit that he is acting against the Shastras, and, in order to justify his own ways, he makes attempts to show that the Shastras themselves have prescribed such ways, and a vast number of his colleagues, similarly situated, are always ready to applaud him for his wonderful discoveries following such attempts. Societies, Samajas and Schools of thought which ignore or even discard Caste and Asrama Dharmas readily find favour with them all. This half-hearted method of following the Shastras has done more mischief to the Aryan religion than non-Hindu mission agency or even materialism or atheism. These can only attack it from the outside and can be successfully combated. Even if there should be caused some injuries in the combat, they are not more than skin-deep. But, the ways of the modern half-educated Hindu are more dangerous. He acts as poison inside the system, contaminates the whole of it, and hastens its early destruction. If we really care for India and her ancient Aryan Religion, immediate steps ought to be taken to avoid this speedy culmination of evil.

28. The cure must begin in the Brahmin community. The nervous system ought to be set right before

Remedy is with the Brahmin.

the tone of the whole body can improve. Mischief originated in the Brahmin. He ought to initiate also the change for the better. In the first place he should understand that his present much-boasted superiority has no reference to him personally but belongs to, and indicates the grandeur of, the elevating Brahminical Dharmas. He should remember that he is one having certain *duties* to perform, *not mere rights* to exercise, and that regard, if claimed and demanded or enforced, ceases to be regard any more. He should keep himself pure, body and mind. He should be free from hate and blame. He should ascertain his own Dharmas and follow them as far as possible under his present conditions. He should also ascertain others' Dharmas and properly teach and guide such of those others who may be willing to be so taught and guided. The Brahmin is the teacher by birth-right, as India is made by the Lord the spiritual teacher of the whole world. But the Brahmin cannot teach unless he is properly qualified for the position of "Teacher" by precept and example. If he should improve, the rest are bound to improve by his teaching. His responsibilities, indeed, are heavy, and his ignoring them means a wholesale fall. He should realise his lofty position and his heavenly mission, and should study hard, work hard and help all.

29. Thus, we have been able to find, though imperfectly, that not only is this universe being guided by the Divine Hand along the path of steady progress, but also there are in that path clearly visible four distinct stages, each such stage possessing its own Dharmas and peculiarities. Traces of these four stages of evolution are discernible in the Lokas of this universe, in the nations, in the classes, and even in the individual man. We should be, in fact, happy to find that we are indeed in a world of Law. Our Ancient Rishis have closely studied the manifold and immense operations of this Universal Law, and have built up, for our own use, and indirectly for the use of the world at large, a kind of social fabric which stood firm and erect, so long as faith in such Law and faith in the greatness of such Divine Seers remained strong. Unfortunately, at present, such faith is being shaken by growing ignorance from within and destructive influence from without. Most of the domestic miseries in our families, and evils in our society, which are ignorantly attributed to the inherent nature of our ancient system, are but the direct results of such blind ignorance and such ruinous influences. Still, these can only shake, and not destroy, altogether that faith. For, a Law, which is eternal and universal in its application, can never cease to be, and, whatever may be man's ignorance about it, whatever may be man's prejudices against

Conclusion.

DISCOURSE VI.

The Study of the Upanishats.

(वेदैरनेकैरहमेव वेद्यः—कै—उप.)

Introduction.

1. In our study of the path of evolution it was found that there are four distinct stages of progress which, for the sake of convenience, we called "the four paths of evolution." The first is the path of obedience, the second the path of selfish action, the third the path of action for the good of others, and the fourth is the path of inaction or absolute renunciation. Many of us have already left behind us, at least, we think we have left behind us, the path of obedience. As for the path of selfish action, we are wholly on it. We need not be taught to be selfish. We are already over-flowing with selfishness. The third and the fourth being the paths of qualified and absolute renunciation respectively, "Renunciation" is the watch-word for enabling one to travel along these final paths[1]. Unless

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1. न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ।
(तैत्तिरीयारण्यकम् १०. १०)

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः संन्यासयोगाद्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।
ते ब्रह्मलेके तु परान्तकाले परामृतात्परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥
(मुण्डकोपनिषत् ५)

and until we are prepared to cultivate habits of renunciation, we cannot think of placing our feet on either of these paths, especially on the fourth. Therefore, it is our duty to know something about renunciation. Our sacred Upanishats deal exclusively with the final path of absolute renunciation[1], as indicated by the Great Ones, and as even found out by the oriental scholars of the West, such as Dr. Roer and Sir M. Monier Williams. Understanding what our Upanishats have in store for us, we shall be sadly failing in our duty to ourselves, if we do not attempt their study to secure that absolute bliss and peace to which no other possession is equal. We have the Upanishats with us. They promise a great deal. The wise, who have studied them and practically realised in their lives the truths revealed through them, say in unmistakable terms that supreme bliss, happiness beyond compare, is sure to be attained through such study and realisation. Not only in our mother-land, India, but in far-off countries also, the flower of thinking humanity, men like the great

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तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः (ईशावास्योपनिषत्)

1. सेयं ब्रह्मविद्योपनिषच्छब्दवाच्या तत्पराणां सहेतोः संसारस्यात्यन्तावसादनात्। उपनिपूर्वस्य सदेस्तदर्थत्वात्। तादर्थ्याद्ग्रन्थोऽप्युपनिषदुच्यते। विरक्तस्याविद्यानिवृत्तये तद्विपरीतब्रह्मविद्याप्रतिपत्त्यर्थोपनिषत्।

(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा १)

German philosopher Schopenhauer find solace and peace in the Upanishats. But we, the vast majority in India, do not approach the Upanishats. They are too old and obsolete for us. They that were once our only possessions, my Brahmin friends, are now thrown away, and in their place we have money and anxiety, luxury and discomfort; a poor substitute indeed. Let us try all our might, in the hoarding up of money, in the unending collection of fancy articles about us and in the putting on of magnificent or imposing appearances to find that genuine peace and comfort. We cannot find them[1]. The more we get into such worldliness, the more is our object away from us. Many have been those who tried like ourselves, and none of them seems to have reached the desired goal by such means. Ours is different from and far[2] inferior to the right path which, though narrow, is open to us still. Without doubt, few are those who have gone by that narrow path, the path of supreme wisdom and absolute renunciation, but those few appear to have been considerably benefitted by going along that path. They declare that that way it is that leads to the proper goal, the goal of Eternal

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1. न वित्तेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यः । (काठकोपनिषत् १)

2. तयोः संन्यासपथ एवातिरेचयति । न्यास एवात्यरेचयदिति च तैत्तिरीयके । (ईशावास्योपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा)

Peace and Absolute Freedom[1]. This assurance means a great deal. It serves as a beacon-light to their perplexed brethren. It is our interest therefore to know something of that path through the study of the Upanishats and to enter into the path soon. With a view to make necessary preparations for such study and entrance, let us consider now what qualifications are required of the person who wishes to be really benefitted by the study of the Upanishats, and also let us see how far we, in our present position, may be justified in seriously entering into such study. This discourse attempts to deal with these preliminary considerations.

Vedas Eternal.

2. What are Upanishats then? They form the last portion of the Vedas and they deal with the essence or very end of all Vedic knowledge. The Vedas, as Sir M. Monier Williams says, are "the original source and fountain head of all Indian religious thought, philosophy and literature." They are classed under three divisions, the Mantra or prayer portion of the Vedas or Samhithas, the Brahmanas treating of rituals, and the Aranyakas whose important portion consists of the Upanishats dealing with the ultimate truths of all

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1. अणुः पन्था विततः पुराणो मां स्पृष्टोऽनुवित्तो मयैव। तेन धीरा अपि यन्ति ब्रह्मविदः स्वर्गं लोकमित उर्ध्वं विमुक्ताः ॥ (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् ४)

religion and philosophy. Of these, the Mantras are by some moderns considered to have been composed earlier than the Brahmanas, and the latter earlier than the Upanishats. The Mantras were originally classed under three heads, the Rik, the Yajus and the Sama, and later on into four, including the Athharvana. Of these, the Rik-Mantras are considered to be the earliest. I shall not now attempt to enter into the question of determining the dates of these several compositions, and none but the oriental scholars of the West will in such matters be satisfied with conclusions based upon unfounded assumptions and vague conjectures. Whether the Vedas or their Mantras are only 3,000 years old, as the Western scholars would ask us to believe, or whether they are as old as Humanity itself, the Vedas are by the Aryan Hindus considered to be eternal and of universal application, and they are so at least in the sense that the ultimate truths and the fundamental principles revealed through them hold good for all times and for all individuals, although, in the practical working out of those fundamental principles, differences may arise as between one man and another, as between one nation and another; and such differences must naturally arise as they directly result from difference of condition in which each such man or nation is found placed. The ultimate truths remain ultimate truths for ever, although men may fight with men about the name to be given to the medium of revelation of such

truths. Whether we call such medium "the Vedas" or by any other name, it is sufficient if we are able to recognise truth wherever it may be found or in whatever manner it may be presented. It is admitted on all hands that the Vedas of the Aryan Hindus are the most ancient of the Scriptures belonging to the Aryans who form the leading nations of the world to-day. The Vedas being the most ancient of the Aryan Scriptures, it is at least very likely, as it is claimed, that the fundamental truths, of which the Vedas are the verbal expression, formed the groundwork of the Scripture of the original Aryan abode, before the Aryans separated from one another and settled down in different countries. The unmistakable identity of most of the fundamental ideas of all Aryan religions, and the admitted presence of the influence of the language of the Vedas, the Sanskrit, in all Aryan languages, very much strengthen our inference, and Sir M. Monier Williams seems to hold this view when he says that "the Vedic Mantras embody some of the earliest religious conceptions of that primeval Aryan race-stock from which Greeks, Romans, Kelts, Teutons and the Slavonic races are all off-shoots".

Divine origin of Vedas.

3. About the origin of the Vedas, considering the indisputable antiquity of our Vedic literature, considering the naturally simple life the Aryans of old must have been leading, considering the natural

probability that they, in such early stages of their national or racial life, could have made but little progress in respect of sciences, both phenomenal and noumenal, and considering at the same time the loftiest flights of spirituality exhibited in the Vedas, I believe it is nothing unnatural to maintain that the Vedas were indeed revelations made to and for the benefit of the Aryan race by the Most High through His Representatives on this earth. The fact of revelation may not be believed in by those who think that our Aryan Hindu Religion, as it is at present, is the result of a process of evolution of religious concepts in man. If, in what are considered to be the earliest compositions of the Vedic literature, we find truths truer than any subsequently discovered, and if in them we find the clear existence of the so-called latest developments of religion, then, the theory of "Evolution of religion of the Hindus from the crude form of worship of physical forces in Nature" cannot stand. In the admittedly earliest of the Vedic compositions, the Mantras, we find, as is admitted by the Western scholars, the celebrated Esavasyam which contains, as it were, the essence of all the Upanishats put together. Scholars like Sir M. Monier Williams seem to think that, until the age of the later Upanishats, the Hindus were more or less worshippers of non-intelligent forces in Nature and that they had no idea of an Almighty Intelligent Existence. The

existence of the Esavasyam, the existence of the well-known Purushasukta of the Rig Veda treating about the Ultimate Reality, the Supreme Purusha, and the existence of the most sacred of the Mantras, the Gayatri of the three Vedas, treating of the Universal Divine Light, as admitted by Sir William Jones, prove clearly that such scholars should learn more of India and India's religion before they can venture any such opinion. Although some of us may be of the opinion that all the Vedic compositions could not have been in existence from the very beginnings of time, and that some of them, especially some of the Upanishats, must be of later origin than the others, it can at least be claimed that the fundamental truths of the Ancient Aryan Religion of the present day are exactly the same as those revealed originally to the infant Aryan race, and Prof. F. Max Muller seems to be in favour of this view (Vide his introduction to the Upanishats). In connection with the conjecture that the Hindu Religion, as it is, may be the result of a process of evolution of religious notions of man, a recent pronouncement by Mr. F. B. Jevons in one of his lectures on "Religion in Evolution" that there is no proof that Religion has been evolved out of, or preceded by, a non-religious or pre-religious stage in the history of man may also be considered.

4. So far as the philosophical side of our Religion is considered (in India, Religion and philosophy

Upanishats—their simplicity.

are inseparable), the Upanishats form the most important portion of the Vedas. Of the several paths, rather, of the several stages of the path, leading up to the Final Liberation, the Absolute Beatitude described in the Vedas, the one, most direct and immediate, though difficult, the path of Absolute Renunciation, is dealt with in the Upanishats. In these Upanishats we find the teaching given, in most cases, in the form of dialogues between a spiritual Guru and an advanced pupil, a most effective way of imparting knowledge. The Upanishats, it must be remembered, are not treatises, in the strict sense of the term, but are only the outpourings, as Dr. Roer would put it, of Divine Truths, truths revealed and declared, not to the all-doubting sceptic but to sincere students or Sishyas sufficiently advanced to recognise the truth when once revealed. Such teachings were in slow degrees handed down to posterity in regular succession, and the Aryans then, realising the Divine origin of such teachings, with due faith accepted them as most true. We do not find much of discussion in the Upanishats, and discussion is necessary only where opposition is found or expected. Sri Sankaracharya, for instance, had to face opposition, had to discuss all questions and establish the truth by argumentation, and his powerful argumentativeness is astonishing, even to-day, to the intelligent and thinking section of

humanity. No such necessity could have been felt in the case of the Upanishats, and we naturally find them short and simple.

Qualification necessary.

5. Nextly, arises the question "who is properly qualified to study the Upanishats?" The qualifications necessary for the beginning of a study depend upon the object of such study. The Upanishats, as already pointed out, deal with the path of absolute renunciation leading finally to the state of infinite bliss and peace. Any one who is not in the way of becoming qualified to place his foot on the path of absolute renunciation has no right to begin such study.[1] No doubt, any man in

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1. एतैर्हि (तपःकर्मदमादिभिः) संस्कृतस्य सत्वशुद्धिद्वारा तत्वज्ञानोत्पत्तिर्दृष्टा ह्यमृदितकल्मषस्योक्तेऽपि ब्रह्मण्यप्रतिपत्तिर्विपरीतप्रतिपत्तिश्च .... ।

(केनोपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा. ४)

इदमष्टोत्तरशतं (१०८ उपनिषदः) नदेयं यस्य कस्यचित् ।
नास्तिकाय कृतघ्नाय दुराचाररताय वै ।
मद्भक्तिविमुखायासच्छास्त्रगर्तेषु मुह्यते ।
गुरुभक्तिविहीनाय दातव्यं न कदाचन ।
सेवापराय शिष्याय हितपुत्राय मारुते ।
मद्भक्ताय सुशीलाय कुलीनाय सुमेधसे ।
सम्यक् परीक्ष्य दातव्यमेवमष्टोत्तरं शतम् ।

(मुक्तिकोपनिषत्)

the world, however unqualified, may in fact read the Upanishats; but the truth remains that, when an unqualified person attempts to study what he is not as yet fit to approach, sometimes more harm is done than good. What is good for a person of considerable spiritual advancement may be positively bad for one who stands low in the grade of spirituality. A particular truth revealed to the advanced student is likely to be used to the best advantage, while the same truth, if revealed to the ignorant, may neither be understood[1] correctly nor be used in the right way. What is good for the healthy may prove injurious to the invalid. We feed the latter with what his physical body can assimilate and nothing more. In the same way, it is not all truths that are to be revealed to all men if we

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वेदान्ते परमं गुह्यं पुराकल्पे प्रचोदितम् ।
नाप्रशान्ताय दातव्यं नापुत्रायाशिष्याय वा पुनः ॥
(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्)

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।
न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥
(भगवद्गीता. १८—६७)

गुह्याद्गुह्यतरमेषा (उपनिषत्) न प्राकृतायोपदेष्टव्या ।
(महावाक्योपनिषत्)

1. न सांपरायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढम् ।.
(काठकोपनिषत् २.)

really care for their progress. They should be made to ascend step by step and not to attempt to jump up all at once to the highest steps of the ladder and fall down in the attempt. The path of absolute renunciation being the last of the paths of progress, as was shown in the last discourse, can be taken only by the one who has trodden along the other paths. Before the evolving Jeeva enters the second path, he must have already learnt all the lessons of the first, the path of absolute obedience. Before he enters the third path, the path of selfless action, he must have learnt all the bitter lessons of selfish activities. When the Jeeva has realised all the evils of selfishness, he becomes qualified to enter into the third path, the path of altruistic thoughts and actions. While in this third path, the path of qualified renunciation, the Jeeva grows to be more and more altruistic in his thoughts; and, after considerable progress is made, the gate-way of the fourth path, the path of absolute renunciation, the path which is described in the Upanishats, becomes visible. For knowing anything about the path of absolute renunciation, we should have advanced far enough in the path of qualified renunciatiou; before we think of studying the Upanishats, we should have already largely converted our thoughts into selfless nes. According to the principle underlying the Aryan Caste System the Kshatriya is intended to

travel along the third path, the path of qualified renunciation, and the Brahmin is expected to go along the path of absolute renunciation. As the person who wishes to study the Upanishats is required to be duly qualified to approach the final path of renunciation, the Upanishats were allowed by our Ancients to be studied only by the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, and even in their case such study was *ordinarily* allowed only after their entering into the Vanaprasthhasrama[1] (retirement into a forest); for, it is only in such a stage of life a man is likely to become prepared for cultivating habits of thorough renunciation. In this connection, we should remember that the recognised place for the Upanishats is in the Aranyakas of the Vedas (Aranya meaning "forest").

Study of Upanishats in modern conditions.

6. It is these Upanishats, allowed to be studied by such advanced Jeevas and under stringent conditions, that some of us are attempting to master, we who are more or less strangers to things really spiritual (even though some of us are the physical descendants of the mighty Rishis of old). The Raja-

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1. एताश्चान्याश्च सेवेत दीक्षा विप्रो वने वसन्।
विविधाश्चोपनिषदीरात्मसंसिद्धये श्रुतीः ॥
(मनुस्मृतिः ६—२९)

Rishis are no more to be found, and Brahmins-in-merit there are very few. What is to become of the Upanishats then, if we are not competent to study them? Properly speaking, they ought to be preserved as sealed books, not to be touched by unclean hands[1]. They ought not to be approached except by those [2] who have made sufficient progress which qualifies them to place their feet on the path of renunciation and who have been duly initiated into such studies by qualified teachers. Any person who has not made such necessary preparations will not only fail to understand the Upanishats, but will, in all probability, misunderstand them; for they deal with things not belonging to his present stage of evolution, and of whose value he has not yet become competent to judge. Now, the question arises, whether these Upanishats are accordingly kept

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1. विद्या हवै ब्राह्मणमाजगाम तवाहमस्मि त्वं मां पालय अनर्हते मानिने नैव मा दा गोपाय मां श्रेयसी तथाहमस्मि ।

(छान्दोग्यब्राह्मणम्)

विद्या ब्राह्मणमेत्याह शेवधिस्तेऽस्मि रक्ष माम् ।
असूयकाय मां मा दास्तथास्यां वीर्यवत्तमा ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः २-११४)

2. यमेव तु शुचिं विद्यान्नियतब्रह्मचारिणम् ।
तस्मै मां ब्रूहि विप्राय निधिपायाप्रमादिने ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः २—११५.)

reserved for the developed Jeevas alone. Most certainly, no. The Upanishats are laid open to the gaze of all. Every one who has a smattering of religion wants to read them, not always with a view to realise the sublime truths revealed in them, for that is impossible in his case, but often with the object of passing, in the eyes of the world, for a scholar in the Upanishats. Certain others, being incited by a feeling of curiosity, and such are some of our oriental scholars of the West, want to study them, and such study will naturally confer on them only such benefit as the motive for the study deserves. Others again there are who study them with the specific object of criticising disapprovingly the views expressed in them, and surely the ideas that they are able to gather through such study are so tinged with the colour of prejudice that such ideas are altogether different from what the Upanishats are intended to convey. It is in these ways, without proper motives and without proper guidance, the Upanishats are being studied in our days by a large number of men who, in strict truth, would prove much wiser, and less injurious to others, by refraining from any such study.

Nature of Qualification.

7. If the Upanishats have to be studied at all for good, they can be studied only by the persons who satisfy certain definite conditions, some internal or mental, and the others external or physical. As

regards the internal conditions, the student should have passed through the first path of obedience; he must have out-grown the stage of utter ignorance; and he must have left behind him the second stage of selfish activity and realised the evils of the life of selfishness. Being prompted, in consequence of such realisation, by a desire for absolute freedom from all evil (Mumukshutwam), he should have learnt *somewhat* to discriminate between the Noumenal Reality, the Source of Bliss, and the Phenomenal Unreality, the Source of Evil, and to give up attachment to the latter (Viveka and Vairagya). He must have so trained his mind and his body that they do *not readily* yield to the power of attraction of Phenomenal Embellishments (Shama, Dama, etc). His motives of action must have been, *to some extent* at least, changed into selfless ones, and his happiness must consist at least partially in securing happiness to others. In short, his inner nature must have been so moulded that he can successfully begin to practise absolute renunciation, without being ruffled into activity by motives of egotistic character. Again, corresponding to such internal conditions, the student should be also mindful of certain external conditions which considerably help him in the way of securing the internal ones. In our attempt to mould our inner nature, we have, to a great extent, to work under the particular circumstances that surround our physical existence and through the physical body. It is

almost idle to say that we, in our present state of progress, can train our mind and rise in the scale of mental or spiritual development without caring for the physical conditions of our existence. Such conditions have immense effect upon our mind, and the nature of our mental progress depends considerably upon them. To rise high in mental or spiritual progress, one must have suitable physical body, chiefly, the result of proper physical heredity, and desirable physical environments, and he must scrupulously preserve personal cleanliness, must be careful about the nature of food and other things taken into the body, and, above all, must be very particular about the regularity of his habits. It is when such physical conditions are fulfilled that the body becomes a fit instrument to be used in aid of his improving the inner qualifications.[1] Such are the conditions required to be satisfied by the students of the Upanishats, conditions both internal and external. The Great Ones, taking all these into consideration, ruled that only certain specified classes of people could study the Upanishats and that only in particular stages of life after the attainment of the prescribed qualifications comprised under the term Sadhanacha-

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1. आहारशुद्धौ सत्त्वशुद्धिः सत्त्वशुद्धौ ध्रुवा स्मृतिस्स्मृतिलम्भे सर्वग्रन्थीनां विप्रमोक्षः । (छान्दोग्योपनिषत् ७–२६.)

thushtayam,[1] of which the details will be found in all works on the Hindu Philosophy of Religion.

Some words of caution.

8. The Brahmins of our days are the physical descendants of such qualified class of people. The internal qualification is difficult to be found in most of them now, and the external conditions are being hopelessly ignored. It is therefore I venture to say that many of us, Brahmins, are at present not entitled to approach the upanishats. One must first strive to fulfil the prescribed conditions of studentship, and to secure the qualifications required for entering on such study. To you, my non-Brahmin friends, I have one word in particular to say. It may be, the Brahmin of the day may have lost a great portion of the claim for regard due to a Brahmin-in-merit. It may be, his inner life is not the life of the Brahmin, and is unworthy of any attempt on his part to enter on a kind of study, the study of the Upanishats, too high for him at present. But this incompetency of the modern Brahmin, you should remember, does not create in you any

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1. आद्यं नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः साधनं मतम् ।
इहामुत्रार्थफलभोगविरागो द्वितीयकम् ॥
शमादिषट्कसंपत्तिः तृतीयं साधनं मतम् ।
तुरीयं तु मुमुक्षुत्वं साधनं शास्त्रसंमतम् ॥
(सर्व—वे—सि—सा—सं.)

new right which you did not possess originally. The fall of the Brahmin does not raise you up one inch higher. It is no doubt a fact that you possess in you the sure possibility of securing the special qualifications of the Brahmin that can make you fit to enter on such study. But, unless and until you work yourselves up and qualify yourselves to enter into the path of renunciation, unless and until you have fully learnt all the lessons of obedience, all the lessons of the path of action for self, and afterwards have also successfully learnt the way of acting for the good of others without selfish motives, and unless and until you have so modified your *physical* conditions that they considerably assist you in your upward march, you are no better than the fallen Brahmin, and you have no right to touch the Upanishats. You must bear in mind that no man in the world is "excluded," in the real sense of the term, from the study of the Upanishats which are open to all who are able or qualified and willing to enter on their study, and that "exclusion," often referred to in the Shastras, is based upon "the insistence on the necessity and the desirability of qualifications." And you, my Brahmin friends, must not forget that our Brahminhood does not consist in our putting on of external appearances of Brahmins-in-merit; nor even does it depend upon the much-boasted fact that we are the direct descendants of mighty Brahma-Rishis of old. But, we must strive our best to revive in ourselves the true characteristics

of the Brahmin and fit ourselves to enter on the final path of progress. How should we make ourselves so fit becomes now the important question. We must recognise our fallen position at present and try to understand in what way our degradation has been brought about. We must recognise the evil and know its origin, and then try to remove it, or, if that should be impossible, we must try to turn our very evil to the best possible use. In the last discourse some of the causes of our fall were mentioned. Knowing such causes, we are indeed in a better position to understand the real nature of the path upwards, and, going along the upward path step by step, we shall hope not only to regain our original level but also to proceed onwards and onwards until the final goal is reached. So, we shall not be discouraged when we find that there is after all not much difference between ourselves, as we are at present, and others as regards the qualifications required to take up the study of the Upanishats, although it must be granted that the Brahmin even now has some advantages not possessed by others, namely, a suitable physical heredity and comparatively much better physical environments; and in addition, there is also the further fact that he has only to relearn his old lessons and to get back his lost qualifications, which can be more easily and sooner done than in the case of the one who has to learn anew. And here I feel bound to mention the deplorable fact that some

Brahmins unfortunately try their very best to contaminate their bodies by adopting some of the modern-day-vices and to lose even the few advantages that they possess over their brethren.

Gradual, steady progress.

9. Our first business is therefore to try and secure the required qualifications. We have only to see whether and how far we are prepared to learn the lesson of renunciation. By "renunciation" is meant the abandonment of all desires which widen more and more the gulf between one individual and another and which, by preventing such individual from realising his oneness *in Spirit* with all the others, subject him to the operation of the rigid Law of Karma; it is the abandonment of all attachment to the fruits of actions, and the consequent abandonment, or rather non-happening, of the very activities for one's own benefit. [*True renunciation*, be it remembered, is *always mental*, and *never merely physical or external*, as is very often mistaken in these our degenerate days in which Sanyasis in appearance and Yogis in form have become as innumerable as real Sanyasa and Yoga have become rare.] It is the lesson of such true renunciation that is taught in the Upanishats. Again, before we could think of *abandoning* altogether our desires and their consequent selfish actions, we should have learnt *to control* those desires, and for controlling them we should know the

several methods by which such control may be effected. And before we could begin to control them, we must have realised, to some extent at least, the manifold evils that arise from allowing the desires to have their full play. It is when these minor lessons are taught to us we become competent to enter on the final study, the study of the path of abandonment or renunciation. If, instead of going up, step by step, we take to the study of the Upanishats all at once, it is almost certain that we may fail to benefit by such study. Before we determine to study them, we should understand at what particular stage of progress or development we are, and consider that it is more important for us to know the very next step just higher than the one that is ours to-day, and that we would be really helping our own evolution by practically learning to ascend to that next step, rather than by all the theoretical knowledge that we may think we possess about the highest steps of the ladder which it is not possible for us to reach as we are at present situated.

Some suggestions.

10. Therefore, my fellow-students, study yourselves first. Understand properly the universal law of evolution of the Thinker in you. Study the different kinds of activities going on in the universe. Try to know the nature of the four stages of the path of evolution, and the special characteristics of each of them. Know definitely along which of the four paths you are, each

of you, now progressing. Ascertain clearly what particular Dharmas belong to that specific stage. Follow those Dharmas, whatever they may be. Those Dharmas, when successfully gone through, will soon take you up to the stage next higher than your present one. Let us give up all our mistaken notions that we have risen far above the stage of action. Let us abandon the idea that there is no lesson in the universe to receive which we are yet not fit. Let us thoroughly realise our weakness and our ignorance, and in such realisation consist our strength and our wisdom. Our revered Ancestors, who had studied the nature of the four stages of evolution, have laid down for our use definite courses of conduct, based on the Divine[1] Code of morals, which are sure to take us successfully through the three lower stages.[2] Let us take firm hold of such moral rules so prescribed and act them out in life. For this end, it is all important that we should be constantly studying the lives of Great Men, so as to learn how we should conduct ourselves under given circumstances. Our Ithihasas and Puranas are intended to give us such teachings. But, you should

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1. धर्मस्य शब्दमूलत्वात् । (जैमिनिः १—३)

2. स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मेण तपसा गुरुतोषणात् ।
साधनं प्रभवेत्पुंसां वैराग्यादिचतुष्टयम् ॥
(वराहोपनिषत्)

study them properly and in right spirit. Many of our modern scholars read them with a prejudice against them, and they are able to find in them only a reflection of their own nature. Cast aside, therefore, all prejudice, if you want to understand them properly and you will find in them an immense lore of wisdom. Again, with a view to realise in our lives the truth of such wholesome teachings, we should be constantly exercising self-control, control of body and mind, and our Shastras considerably help us in the exercise of such control.[1]

Qualification secured.

11. It is when these lower stages of progress are passed through, it is when you, realising your position, have so far trained your present bodies that they are beginning to serve as your proper instruments, it is when you have learnt to check the free advance of your desires and to live the life prescribed by the Shastras, and not until then,[2] you begin to see some glimpses of the final

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1. तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

(भगवद्गीता १६—२४)

2. साधनान्यत्र चत्वारि कथितानि मनीषिभिः ।
येषु सत्स्वेव सन्निष्ठा यदभावे न सिद्ध्यति ॥

(विवेकचूडामणिः)

path of evolution, the path of renunciation, the path illumined by the Sacred Upanishats. It is when you have advanced so far you[1] become the qualified students of that Upanishadic Philosophy which deals with the Spiritual[2] side of the universe, with the Absolute Essence of things.

Conclusion.

12. Once you become so qualified, you are on that very path, and in the Upanishats you then find the most valuable of guides to take you along the path. It is in that stage of progress the Upanishats are of real value to you. Raise yourselves up to that glorious height. Study the Upanishats *then*, and be happy as ever you are, the Secondless One Self.[3]

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥
देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं पुरा न हि सुविज्ञेयमणुरेष धर्मः ।
(काठकोपनिषत् १—२)

1. तेषामेवैतां ब्रह्मविद्यां वदेत । (मुण्डकोपनिषत् ३)

2. सर्वासामुपनिषदामात्मयाथात्म्यनिरूपणेनैवोपक्षयात् ।
(ईशावास्योपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा.)

3. सोऽद्वैतपरमानन्दलक्षणपरं ब्रह्म भवति ।
(महानारायणोपनिषत्)

DISCOURSE VII.

Image Worship

AND

The Aryan Trinity.

(अहं सन्निहितस्तत्र पाषाणप्रतिमादिषु—रा-उ-ता-उप.)

1. In this discourse it is intended to invite the reader's attention to one of the chief practical aspects of Atma-Vidya, which form some of the important differentiating and characteristic peculiarities of the Hindu Religion.

Introduction.

In the previous discourses it was pointed out that the universe and all individual beings therein have alike the same One Absolute Self for their Reality, that the Individuality or Jeevatwam of the Thinker is unreal, being created by, or the result of, Avidya, that the theory of evolution can be true only with reference to the Thinker and not as regards the Real Paramarthhika Self behind the Thinker, that the whole universe is in existence only for, and on account of, the Thinker, that the progress of the Thinker in evolution has four natural and distinct stages, and that at the end of the path of evolution is reached the Final Goal of individual existence, the Ultimate Realisation of the Absolute Oneness of the many in

the Self. It was mentioned in the third discourse that the Aryan Image-worship and Guru-worship lead to such realisation. Of these two modes of worship the latter, namely, Guru-worship, is but an aspect of the former. The well-known Caste System and Image-worship chiefly mark out the Ancient Aryan Hindu Religion from the other religions of the world. Of these two, the Caste System was dealt with at some length in the fifth discourse. In the present one it is proposed to consider the nature, the desirability and the necessity of Image-worship.

What is Image-worship?

2. No other aspect of the Ancient Aryan Faith has been so much frequently attacked as the one having reference to Image-worship. Such attacks are invariably the result of blind ignorance and thoughtless prejudice. Without even an attempt to know what it is, people begin to attack it from all sides, calling it by the misleading term "Idolatry." Image-worship does not mean worship of the Image itself. It means worship of the Supreme Self through and by means of Image. It is the process whereby the wandering mind, on whose varied activity the Thinker or Vyavaharika Jeevatma depends for his existence, is gradually brought to a centre of attraction, and thereupon its flickering tendencies are, one

after another, removed by constant one-pointed[1] contemplation on the nature of the One Limitless Self of whom the Image, used for worship, is a manifestation under name and form, or limitation. By this process the phenomenal appearance of the object used in worship as the Image of the Supreme and, as the practice of such worship becomes strengthened, also the phenomenal appearance of the whole universe composed of similar objects are, by slow and steady degrees, altogether kept out of the mind, the Inner Permanent Noumenal Self[2] alone being contemplated upon, and the worshipper soon realises the illusive nature of the work of Maya, the Mother of the Phenomenal.

Some questions.

3. Very often, questions like the following are asked :—" How can it be possible that the Realisation of the Absolute, All-pervasive, Eternal, Unlimited Self can be had by the use of an Image which possesses attributes just the reverse in character ? Can it be said that the gross, perishable, physical Image, having form and characterised by finiteness, can represent the Supreme Formless Spiritual Self characterised by Infinitude of

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1. मनसश्चेन्द्रियाणां च ऐकाग्र्यं परमं तपः ।

(जीवन्मुक्तिविवेकः)

2. सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा सर्वभूताधिवासः सर्वभूतनिगूढः ।

(शाण्डिल्योपानिषत्)

Existence, Consciousness and Bliss? Does not the use of such an Image in worship rather tend to make the worshipper forget the real nature of the Infinite Self? Does not the permanent establishment of Images in the Hindu Temples create and maintain an impression in the mass of the Hindu community that God, the Supreme Self, has no existence outside the temples? Is it absolutely necessary that there should be an Image to create religious devotion in man? Does piety always arise by means of Image-worship alone? Have there been no pious devotees, Saints, among the Christians and the Muhammadans who condemn Image-worship? Is Form always necessary for contemplation? Have not the Western Scientists studied the nature and ascertained the properties of Ether and Electricity, although these are Formless? Even supposing that Formful Image is necessary for mental concentration, why should there be prescribed definite forms of Image without allowing each devotee to create his own forms for worship? If there was at all any necessity to fix the form of Image, why should there be many such fixed forms for contemplating on the One Supreme Self? When the Image is of human form, is it altogether possible to dissociate all notions of ordinary human frailties from the One Who is worshipped as being the Soul of such Image? Is it not on account of an impossibility in this respect that in Hindu Temples marriage and

other festivals are celebrated for Gods and Goddesses, and offerings of different kinds are made to Them, as if They have all the human wants and weaknesses? In short, to put it plainly, has not the system of Image-worship thoroughly disfigured the pure Ancient Aryan Religion and, misleading its followers, brought it to its present condition of hopeless degradation? These and similar queries may, no doubt, sound well, but, a critical examination of them will at once reveal their hollowness. In the following pages an attempt is made to show, within the limits of the scope allowed for the same, that the objections of the questioner have no foundation whatsoever, and that Image-worship, instead of being the curse of Hinduism, as the questioner takes it to be, is as a matter of fact one of its chief exceptional merits, of which the Aryan Hindu ought to be greatly proud; and some of the manifold aspects or phases of such Image-worship itself each of the other religions of the world has adopted and utilised for propaganda among people who cannot reach and who are far out of the way of Atma-Vidya.

Doshas and Image-worship.

4. The Aryan Vedic Religion stands alone and supreme above all the other religions of the world by virtue of the fact that, as regards its theories, its philosophy is so much comprehensive that the fundamental principles in all the other Faiths find

in it places severally assigned to them according to their rank with reference to the Ultimate Truth, the Absolute Oneness of the Self, and that, as regards its practical side, the Vedic Religion is the only one which trains up the rising Jeeva, step by step, by placing him, as he progresses onwards, in full possession of the knowledge of all details of the nature of the upward path and of all the distinguishing features of the several marked stages of that path, and by simultaneously making him pass through a practical course of training under a system of discipline varying in strict accordance with the degree of his advancement. Such discipline is intended and necessary for removing all obstacles and defects or impurities(Doshas)in the nature of the rising Jeeva, physical and mental, which stand in the way of his onward progress.[1] Such impurities are, as mentioned in the fifth discourse, chiefly of three classes, namely, Mala, Vikshepa and Avarana. It has been pointed out that Mala-dosha is the impurity in his nature caused by his previous bad Karma or action, and that it can be removed by the due following of Varnasrama Dharmas. Vikshepa-dosha in him is shown to be that which makes his mind ever waver without allowing him to stand firm by the Truth taught or revealed to him. This defect is removed by unswerv-

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1. क्षीणदोषाः प्रपश्यन्ति नेतरे मायया वृताः ।

(रुद्रहृदयोपनिषत्)

ing devotion (Ananyabhaktih) and concentration in worship(Upasana). The third, namely, Avarana-dosha, is the inherent veil of ignorance in the Jeeva, namely, Avidya, which blinds him and prevents his realising in consciousness his one-ness with the Absolute One Self. This can be removed only by Gnana or knowledge of the One-ness of the many. Image-worship, as prescribed by the Great Ones, not only has direct connection with the path of devotion leading to the removal of Vikshepa-dosha, but also prepares the devotee or Bhakta to get rid of his Mala-dosha by being constantly busy in the course of active worship, giving exercise in the right direction to all his organs of action (good Karma), and also to become free from Avarana-dosha by trying to realise the presence of the All-Self in the very Image used in worship. Image-worship has indeed an important place in the field of practical training of the student of Atma-Vidya. It hastens him towards the realisation of the Self in everything that is before him, and of the absolute One-ness of the Self both within and outside himself.

The Passivity of mind.

5. Image-worship considerably helps the conversion of Book-knowledge (Shastrajanyagnanam), arising from a study of the Shastras, into direct experience (Swanubhavam). The Shastras say that the Reality in all, the Self, is without name

and form (Namarupe) and is unlimited and all-pervasive. In our present situation, all acquisition of knowledge is ordinarily through the mind. The mind, being itself limited, can only grasp or cognise things under limitation. The realisation of the Infinite Self cannot be therefore had through mental activity. Our "I" of the world, the present Thinker in the Vyavaharika state of existence, being a creature of mental activity, as shown in a previous discourse, can never have such realisation. It is only the Real Paramarthika Soul who is behind and beyond all mind-limitations, who is the Ultimate One Witness of all states of consciousness, and who is characterised by no differentiations or finiteness in his nature, that can possibly have such realisation. Thus, it is plain that the spiritual aspirant ought to raise his consciousness and state of being from and above the Vyavaharika condition by rendering his mind inactive and by continuous identification of himself with the Witness within, before Whom mental states rise and fall.[1] The mind is said to be active only when it is enlivened by the Real Paramarthika Soul.[2] If He withdraws His life-force, the mind is at once brought to the

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1. सर्वव्यापारमुत्सृज्याहं ब्रह्मेति भावय।

(तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्)

2. आत्मनैवायं ज्योतिषाऽऽस्ते।

(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत—४—३—६)

condition of rest and its cause, Avidya, not being allowed to display her powers of separation and differentiation, becomes immediately incapable of any more mischief. Withdrawal of active life from the mind, be it remembered, does not mean annihilation of the mind. The mind continues no doubt to exist, and, on account of the circumstance that it has its very being in the All-pervasive and Ever-present, Absolute Life, the Self, it reveals its continued existence by passive reception of impressions from outside, namely, sensations, although on account of the withdrawal from it of active life, it has ceased to actively work upon such sensations and upon the memories of past sensations and other feelings by way of manifold imaginations. It is by virtue of these imaginations (Sankalpas) alone the mind is said to be the cause of all bondage and misery in the world. The ordinary mind of the Thinker receives impressions and at once works upon and twists them so as to make them the means of advancing the selfish interests of the Thinker. This working and twisting is because of an idea in the Thinker of the desirability of the object of which the impressions are received (Sameecheenathwadheeh). This, in fact, is the cause of all the troubles of the world.[1] When the worldly-

1. श्रुते दृष्टेऽपि वा भोग्ये यस्मिन् कस्मिंश्च वस्तुनि ।
समीचीनत्वधीत्यागात्कामो नोदेति कर्हिचित् ॥
कामस्य बीजं सकल्पः संकल्पादेव जायते ।

minded Thinker sees an object which is considered by him as pleasure-giving, he does not merely cognise its existence through the mind and stop there, but immediately builds a huge fabric of imaginations by minutely considering all possible selfish uses to which it may be put, sends all his forces of desire towards the object or a similar one so as to besiege and capture it, as it were, and feels very much troubled and considerably uneasy so long as it remains unsecured. The result, in such cases, is very often disappointment which may arise either because the object cannot be at all secured, or because the object, though secured, proves, in the end, to be far from being pleasurable. Such disappointment almost invariably leads to despondency and anger, the two chief aspects of misery. Let us suppose that the same object is placed before an advanced student of Atma-Vidya, who has known the real nature of desire and of phenomenal existence, and who has, by long practice in Image-worship, learnt to direct all his activities to the service of devotion to the Supreme and is consequently free from all Vikshepa-Dosha. His mind remains calm as before,

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न कोऽपि सम्यक्त्वधिया विनैव भोग्यं नरः कामयितुं समर्थः ।
यतस्ततः कामजयेच्छुरेतां सम्यक्त्वबुद्धिं विषये निहन्यात् ॥
यावत्सुखत्वभ्रमधीः पदार्थे तावन्न जेतुं प्रभवेद्धि कामम् ॥
(सर्व-वे-सि-सा-सं)

and no desires arise in him that may disturb his equilibrium and upset him.[1] Though his mind has received impressions from the object by way of sensations, it is not allowed to work upon such impressions and create a forum of its own for the display of its mischiefs. He does not allow his mind to give room to Sameecheenathwa-Buddhi or idea of desirability. His mind is perfectly under his control. It is not allowed to mislead him, its master, by its deceptive activity. When the mind is brought to such a condition of complete subordination and passivity, when it is deprived of its flickering and changing tendencies and propensities of active mischief, and is made calm and steady, it becomes possible to remove from it completely all dirt and traces of impurities, and through such purified, transparent and steady mind is realised the true nature of the Inner Self.

No annihilation.

6. When the mind ceases to be active, the Thinker who owes his existence to mental activity retires from the field of manifestation, and the Reality in him, the Paramarthika Soul, reveals Himself in the

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1. संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानेशषतः ।

(भगवद्गीता. ६—२४)

Immensity of His greatness and glory.[1] Such revelation is not possible so long as mind-activity is not thoroughly subjugated. This subjugation has to be effected, curiously enough, by the Thinker himself. He is required to demolish the very foundation of his own being as Thinker, namely, mental activity. He is asked to dig his own grave. But, a careful consideration will show that this strange peculiarity is only apparent, not real. When mental activity ceases, the Thinker, no doubt, also ceases to exist *as such*, but the Reality in him subsists. The cognizer in the Thinker, the witness of the rise and fall of the states of consciousness, is the Soul Himself, and He survives the cessation of mental activity which gives the appearance of 'Thinker' to the Soul. The Soul does not die when the Thinker, as such, makes his exit out of the scene. The continuity of the witness is preserved throughout, just in the same way as, when we remember our past dreams, we realise that we ourselves were witnessing

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1. यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टते तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥
(काठकोपनिषत् ६)

तल्लयाच्छुद्धाद्वैतसिद्धिः भेदाभावात् ।
यस्य संकल्पनाशः स्यात्तस्यमुक्तिः करे स्थिता ।
(मण्डलब्राह्मणोपनिषत्)

यदा यात्यमनीभावं तदा तत्परमं पदम् ।
(मैत्रायण्युपनिषत्)

the dream-states under the influence of sleep, although the dreamer, as such, is no more. So, there need be no fear that the cessation of our Vyavaharika mental activity may mean our annihilation altogether. On the other hand, such cessation leads to the removal of the narrowing walls of limitation which create the appearance as Thinker, and which make the Infinite appear as the Finite. If it can mean 'annihilation' at all, it is the annihilation of the apparent finiteness in the Soul, and its consequence is—the Absolute Infinite nature of the Witness in all is at once self-revealed.

The use of Image.

7. To bring the mind to the state of complete subordination and passivity is no easy task, and it cannot be done all on a sudden.[1] In the ordinary man, the mind

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1. चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच ॥

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥

(भगवद्गीता-६-३४-३५)

उपायेन निगृह्णीयाद्विक्षिप्तं कामभोगयोः ।
सुप्रसन्नं लये चैव यथा कामो लयस्तथा ॥

(मा-उप-गौड-का)

is like a restless monkey jumping from tree to tree, never sitting in peace in one place. It must be trained slowly and steadily to withdraw, one by one, its outward activities of extended character, to gradually narrow the sphere of its activities and to confine them, in the end, to a central point of attraction. When mind-activity is so brought to a point, its thorough extinguishment becomes afterwards easy. It is difficult to hit a flying bird or a jumping monkey. When it rests on a branch, it is easily shot down. The training in Image-worship makes the mind deprived of its extensive outward activities, and it is made to rest on the Image and to use all its active powers to the service of God in the presence of His Image or Symbol. At the same time, the worshipper is taught to realise that the Image before him is not merely an object used for concentration, but also that it more than represents the Supreme Self Who is the Life in all. This All-pervasive Life being everywhere is also in the Image. In any Image or Form, He is the enlivening Soul. This whole universe, and so every object in this universe, is but an expression of His being through His Infinite Power or Sakti.[1] He may be worshipped in and through any Form or

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1. अनन्तशक्तिसंयुक्तो जगद्रूपेण भासते ।

(त्रिशिखिब्राह्मणोपनिषत्)

Image. Have we not seen that in coronation and similar occasions His Majesty's picture is decorated and taken along in grand processions, his subjects duly expressing homage to the picture, because it represents him? On such occasions, is it for the picture itself all this manifestation of respect is intended? The picture, in fact, only represents the Emperor, and every one knows His Majesty is not himself in it. In the Aryan Image-worship, the Image not only represents the Supreme Self, but He is Himself in it, being its very ensouling Life-principle.[1] The very fact that He is all-pervasive is a reason for prescribing Image-worship.

Mental training in Image-worship.

8. To comprehend His real, absolute, unlimited nature means to subtract from our perceived universe all its Form-making limitations and to realise the Inner Self, the Ultimate Noumenon. For trying this method of subtraction, in the beginning, the whole perceived universe should not be taken at once, but some one object must be taken, and the student must try to subtract from his idea of the object all notions relating to its form-side and to directly contemplate on the Reality, the Noumenon, in it. The Inner

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1. अहं सन्निहितस्तत्र पाषाणप्रतिमादिषु ।
(रामोत्तरतापनीयोपनिषत्)

Reality in the object being the same Self that is the Soul of the universe, the object itself, so long as its form-side is attracting the attention of the mind of the student, is to be treated with reverence, it being the physical embodiment of the Most Holy. So long as the mind is active in the student, the activity is to be utilised for service dedicated to the Inner Self in the Image.[1] This practice of contemplating on the Noumenal Self in the Image gradually makes his mind less and less responsive to impressions from the phenomenal side of the Image. When he succeeds in keeping out of the mind, to some extent, all such impressions, he begins to feel an emptiness in the Image, a vacuum, as it were, for his mind cannot pass beyond the phenomenal into the Inner Noumenal. He is not able to directly cognize through the mind the Real Self in the Image, much less to understand His nature. In order to prevent this feeling of nothingness and of the consequent disappointment also, he is before-hand directed to turn his attention to himself, to his own nature wherefrom he may have some glimpse of the nature of the Self sooner and with less difficulty. He is taught to subtract from his conception of his own nature all ideas relating to his own form-side. He is told how his physical body and life,

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1. सर्वभूतस्थितं देवं सर्वेशं नित्यमर्चयेत् ।

(ब्रह्मविद्योपनिषत्)

and his mind and all states of consciousness, which are perceived by him and which therefore come under the category of 'object,' the seen (Drisyam), cannot be himself who is the perceiver or 'subject' or (Drashta) seer. He is taught that this perceiver or witness in him is the Infinite Self. He is directed to contemplate on this Self in his own nature for sometime, and after such contemplation becomes somewhat steady, he is asked to meditate, after a mental process of transfer called Avahana, on the absolute unity[1] of this Self in him and of the Self in the Image before him. Having been able to have some grasp of the nature of the Ultimate Witness in himself, he is competent to have some glimpse of the underlying Noumenon in the Image also. After this practice of contemplation on the Self in his own nature and in the Imaged object used in worship becomes confirmed, it becomes easier for him to realise the nature and the oneness of the Ultimate Self in everything else also in the universe, for all other objects and beings only occupy the same

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1. यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन्पृथिव्या अन्तरो यं पृथिवी न वेद यस्य पृथिवी शरीरं यः पृथिवीमन्तरो यमयत्येष त आत्माऽन्तर्याम्यमृतः। (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्. ३)
सर्वभूतस्थितं देवं.................................।
आत्मरूपं तमालोक्य ज्ञानरूपं निरामयम्।
(ब्रह्मविद्योपनिषत्)

position as the present Image and the worshipper.[1] [We may now see what is really meant by the subjugation or shooting down of the mind. It means the steadying of the mind by giving it an attractive permanent something to which all its operations may be confined. The mind, it is known to all, sticks to anything which tends towards happiness. If anything else which may lead to greater or more permanent happiness is presented to the mind, it sticks to this in preference by giving up the other. It is also known to all that one's own Self is the dearest and best-loved of all and that everything else which is considered dear is so considered because of its being taken as a source of happiness to the Self.[2] If, therefore, one's own Self or Atma is Himself made the only real object of thought in whatever may be presented before the mind, the mind cannot but be permanently confined to Him, for it can find nothing else to which

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1. यथास्य देहस्य कार्यकारणसंघातस्यात्माऽहं सर्वप्रत्ययसाक्षिभूतश्चेतयिता केवलो निर्गुणोऽनेनैव स्वरूपेणाव्यक्तादीनां स्थावरान्तानामहमेवात्मेति सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं निर्विशेषमनुपश्यति । (ईशावास्योपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा)
यत्र यत्र मनो याति ब्रह्मणस्तत्र दर्शनात् ।
(तेजोबिन्दूपनिषत्)

2. आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति ।
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्. ६—५)

it may stick on in preference. There is and can be nothing dearer and more permanent than the Self. Thus, the effective training of the mind to see the Self in everything means the permanent deprivation of all its varied activities prompted by its seeming touch with Not-Self, and means virtually its annihilation *as mind*, because of the fact that the mind, being itself limited, cannot comprehend the Limitless Self, as it is compelled to do, unless it itself expands, as it were, beyond its own limit of tension, thereby giving up the characteristic limitation of its own nature. The mind, by virtue of such training, ceases to be mind any longer, and becomes one and co-extensive with the Self Universal.]

Image-worship and concentration and knowledge.

9. From the above we see that the two-fold object of the training of the student of Atma-Vidya is served by means of Image-worship. It trains him firstly in the practice of concentration and leads him on to the lofty stage where he holds his mind under thorough subjugation and is no longer worried by activities of any kind, and secondly to reach the goal of Gnanamarga by the realisation of the true nature and the absolute oneness of the Self both outside and inside himself. The student is thus trained in both 'concentration of mind' and 'knowledge' together, and these two are, in a great measure, mutually dependent. Without concentration, know-

ledge cannot be attained; and without some knowledge of the nature of the object in view, there will be no proper incentive for concentration. Thus, it is seen that Image-worship, instead of making the worshipper forget the real nature of the Infinite Self, as the questioner feared (vide para 3 above), considerably helps him by giving him a sort of mixed training for realising it.

Image-worship to be rightly understood.

10. Having thus ascertained in a preliminary way the desirability of Image-worship, let us consider its nature a little more fully and see how it leads to the attainment of the desired Supreme State of Being. The Aryan Shastras have never sanctioned, prescribed or favoured the kind of Idolatry which is condemned by the New Religions of the world. The worship through Image, prescribed in the Shastras, and the much-condemned Idolatry should not be confounded together. Without in the least understanding what Image-worship really is, and evidently committing the deplorable mistake of thinking that it means the worship of the Image itself, vain attempts are made to attack it from all sides. The Aryan devotee or Bhakta, who knows what it is, is contemplating, through the formful Image, on the Inner, All-pervasive formless Self. When he worships through Bana or Salagrama, he does not say 'Oh, Stone, I meditate

on thee'. It is only genuine devotees, who themselves know the methods of Image-worship, and who know what words are uttered and what thoughts are entertained by the Bhakta in the course of devotion or Upasana, that can really appreciate the immense value of Image-worship. Others cannot, who are yet to know what it is and what the devotee is actually doing. The ordinary man of the world has no idea of Image-worship at all. He is not trained into its practice, nor has he in these days, generally, the inclination or the patience to ascertain its nature from others. Still, he is not backward in attacking it. When he sees a devotee sitting before an Image, he thinks that the form of the Image is meditated upon. He sees from his own point of view and not from that of the Bhakta. All that he sees in the Image is only its form, and he is not able to pierce into its inner Truth. Let us take an example. A man is sitting having before him, and enjoying the sight of, a blissful object kept within a transparent crystal glass cube. He feels happy at its sight, and the light that is burning near on his right side enables him to see the object in all its splendour. The glass by which it is covered does not prevent his seeing it. He sees it very clearly as though the glass were not there. Let us suppose that another man is come and stands at a distance on the left side and is watching the person who is sitting in peace and happiness. On account of the re-

flection of the burning light on the crystal glass-side of the cube the visitor does not see the object placed within the cube, but sees only the form of the cube shining on account of the reflection. That he does not see the object inside is because he does not come near the cube and see it directly from the front, but takes an oblique view of it from a distance and is deceived by the very light which to the other person reveals fully the grandeur and the splendour of the Inner Bliss. The mere *seeing* of a thing does not necessarily mean *knowing* the thing, for, *knowledge* arises only from *right-seeing*. The distant seer concludes, in ignorance, that the other person is sitting and seeing what he himself is able to see and nothing more. We shall take another illustration, similar and somewhat more familiar. Travelling by a railway carriage a passenger is looking at a light-coloured glass window of the carriage. He sees the whole scenery on the side behind himself passing swiftly by reflection on the glass surface. So long as his attention is drawn by this reflected passing scenery he does not see what is on the other side of the window. Suppose, by a little straining of the eyes and focussing them differently, he becomes able to see *through* the glass. Then, the reflected scenery vanishes from the sight, and the actual scenery on the other side of the glass is seen passing, as it were, in the opposite direction. This illustration indicates how different people, though

appearing to see the same thing, see in actuality different things. Those of us who are guided by the mere forms of things do neither see things as they are, nor see the inner reality through them, but are only influenced by what appears on the surface, the phenomenal appearances which are but reflections of what there is on our own side proceeding the wrong way. The one who is trained in Image-worship knows how to see the Inner Reality through the Image by the proper focussing of his mental eye, without being misguided by the mere phenomenal reflections pictured back, as it were, on his own Anthahkarana, the inner organ. We may also consider the case of a man taking instructions from a Ghosha or Pardhanishin lady behind a screen. A casual visitor sees him talking as if to the screen. He does not know that there is a lady on the other side to whom the man is addressing himself. The visitor has neither the inclination nor the patience to ascertain properly how it happens that the other man is talking alone in front of the screen. Nor does the visitor possess knowledge enough to understand what the other man is actually saying. Nevertheless, he seems convinced that the other man ought to be a fool and that there can be possibly no justification or excuse whatsoever for his talking to the screen. Because all that he sees in front of the other man is only the screen, the inference he has drawn is of course irresis-

tible. In the same way those who attack Image-worship have no hesitation to say that all Aryan devotees or Upasakas, who use Images, ought to be fools or mad men, and they think, rightly enough from their own standpoint of view, that there can possibly be no two opinions on the matter, plain and patent as it is. But, it is the *knower* that can appreciate *knowledge* in others. What is dark and dull to the blind is full of light and life to the Seer. What is Stone to the all-doubting sceptic is an adorable Vibhuthi or embodiment of the Most High to the suppliant worshipper. It is only a true devotee that can discern devotion in others. It is not every man that becomes such a devotee.[1] No genuine devotion can make its appearance in the heart of any, unless that heart is rid of all grossness and impurities which have accumulated on account of ignorance and perversion, and which make it impossible for the heart to vibrate at the subtle, high rate of true devotion.

11. Devotion arises only when a man has some knowledge of the Being Who is the object of

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1. मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्वतः ॥
(भगवद्गीता ७—३)

The busy man and the Temple.

devotion. That there is in existence the Almighty Self should be believed in, before He can be meditated upon in the spirit of devotional love, and before His nature can be fully known. Without faith in the fact of His existence, devotion to Him (Bhakti) or knowledge of His nature (Gnanam) cannot arise. Knowledge of the nature of the known implies, and is based upon, the existence of the known. Many among the people of the day appear to have lost their belief in the very existence of the Supreme, and the modern conditions of life are so formed and guided that the chances of regaining the lost faith seem in certain cases to become more and more remote. The man of the modern busy world appears to be enormously active during many of the hours of his waking life in order that he may earn even for the bare necessaries of life, and he has, rather, thinks he has, no time left for devotion to God. Many have forgotten that there is God, and many more are rapidly forgetting. To this class of men, who are drowned in busy worldiness, the very building of the Hindu Temple is of immense use by constantly reminding them of the existence of the Almighty. The Hindu is asked to bow in devotion whenever he happens to see a Temple-building or its parts, such as the tower. This direction keeps up his faith, and whenever proper occasions arrive he goes into the Temple and has his faith strengthened by

meditation and other acts of devotion. It may perhaps be said that the Christian churches and the Muhammedan mosques equally well remind men of the existence of the Father in Heaven by association of ideas, because the church and the mosque buildings are always used for sermons and prayers alone. But, there is this difference between them. The Hindu believes that there is God in the Temple itself and bows in veneration, while the Christian and the Mussalman consider their churches and mosques only as convenient resorts for purposes of meditation and taking instructions in Religion. The Hindu Temple not only serves as the place of resort for such religious purposes, but is also so designed and established that it is itself the embodiment of the Almighty One. The sight of the Temple does not only remind the common man of the existence of God, but also teaches the advanced believer about the true nature of His Being.

12. The very nature of the Temple building indicates some of the Ultimate Truths. The chief principle underlying the plan of building of the proper Hindu Temple is the very one which underlies the formation of the universe, the Macrocosm, and of man, the Microcosm. The Supreme Eswara, Who is the One, Central, Life-giving Source of the whole of the universe comprised of Lokas or planes of

Temple-building and school-map.

different gradations of existence,and the Paramarthhika Jeevatma who ensouls the human personality composed of Koshas or bodies of limitation, are represented by the Central Divine Image established in the innermost Garbhagriha of the Temple. This image is established by the Great Ones not physically alone but more by means of concentrated psychical force proceeding from their Spiritual Fountain-Head. In the Image verily is stored up the holy influences of the Supreme Spirit. Those who have known the sacred Art of Temple-building can say how each and every part of the building represents, by way of symbol, some definite aspect of the Supreme Truth. The building should be considered as a correct map of the extended manifestation of the Supreme Spirit. Some people who evidently know not that the Temple-building is intended to serve the purpose of a school-map, and who are guided by the modern notions of material convenience, improperly alter the plan of the building. In their ignorance, they are not able to recognize the fact that, though they may make the map look finer and more beautiful by their alterations, they make it impossible for the map to exactly represent facts in nature, that is to say, to serve the purpose for which it has been made. In all the old Temples, the plan of whose building has not been interfered with by later alterations, exceptional holy influences are generally felt by people who have grown to be sensitive enough

to feel them. Of course, the ignorant and presumptuous sceptic cannot feel them anywhere. It is no doubt a fact that even among such old Temples there are some differences in their buildings. For instance, some Temples have seven Prakaras or rounds, some five, some three, and some others only one. But this difference is due to the circumstance that in the Science of Atma-Vidya different kinds of classification are made of the Lokas of the Universe and of the Koshas of man, and in the case of the Temples having only one Prakara all the modes of manifestation are put together under the one head of 'Limitation'. Similarly, there may also be other minor differences, but these are in fact no differences in the eyes of the one who takes the trouble to know all about them. The mighty intelligence of the ancient Aryan Rishis, who have tried their very best to enlighten the ignorant humanity, may, to some extent, be known through the Temples established by them. The value of the Hindu temple, in the matter of imparting knowledge about the Supreme Truths of Religion, is immense and indeed exceptional. It is not every Hindu that understands the value, and the ignorance of the Non-Hindu can be nothing strange.

Temple-Images how established.

13. Again, to the one who understands how Images have been established in the Aryan Temples the belief that the Supreme Lord Himself is bodily present in the temples is inevitable. The Images

in most of the ancient or long-standing Temples are known to have been established by Mighty Rishis or by some of the very Incarnations of the Lord, Who, by bringing into concentrated activity their immense and varied psychical and spiritual powers, have made each such Image the very store and centre of Eswaric life wherefrom is ever proceeding the most holy Spiritual influence available for all who will benefit by it. The Temple-Image, to state once more, is not merely physically established, but a vast flood of strong spiritual thoughts are poured over it so as to convert it into a fit organ through which the Supreme Divine Existence may become manifested for the helping of the bewildered Jeeva. The All-pervasive, Infinite Self is, as it were, made to reveal some of His Powers for the spiritual good of humanity through the Limited Finite Image by the all-loving exertions of the Great Ones, just as the physicist makes the all-pervasive, formless Electricity reveal its powers of varied activity for the material good of man through the formful and limited scientific apparatus created by him. Neither the Great Ones newly create any God in the shape of the Image, nor does the physicist create Electricity through his apparatus. The Image and the apparatus are only the medium of manifestation or objectification of the otherwise generally invisible power that is everywhere.

14. The very sight of the Temple and of the Divine Presence inside the Temple reminds people of the existence of God, revives and strengthens faith in such existence, and helps also the seeker of further knowledge to ascertain the Ultimate Truths about His nature and His varied veils of manifestation. In the Temple, it is the holy influence of the Deity in it that preserves its buildings and carries on all business therein. This influence takes the form of Bhakti or devotion in people, and through such devotion the Temple is kept up and maintained. The whole of such influence proceeds from the Central Image. The Imaged Deity does not Himself actively work, but from Him proceed wholesome forces to be utilized by His Bhaktas for their work of good, and He only remains as the Witness of all. The Temple is, no doubt, intended to be preserved for Him by the devotees, but the fact is that its preservation and maintenance are more really for the training up of the devotees themselves in Atma-Vidya. The Deity, for Himself, has no purpose to serve, and His Manifestation through the Temple-Image is only on account of, and for the benefit of, His Bhaktas. He in reality is without form or Image. His Divine Presence is equally well all over the Temple and also outside it. But only, that Presence is more or less fully manifested through the Image established in

Temple—some teachings.

the centre of the Temple. Similarly, in the universe there is a Central Life-giving Soul, called Eswara, Whose Life-influence is pulsing through the whole of the universe which is His Body or Temple. But for His ensouling life the universe would be no-where. He is in a sense imaged by His own Sakti, Satwic Maya, and His place is the very heart of the universe. His Mayavic influence has created and is preserving the whole of the universe. The withdrawal of such influence from the universe means its annihilation or Pralaya. Though the universe is kept up by His Life-influence, He has no purpose of His own to serve by keeping it up, but it is preserved by Him because the Vyavaharika Jeevas or Thinkers require it. Eswara is never Himself actively engaged in the work of the universe, but the work is going on under His Divine Life-influence, and He remains as ever the One Universal Witness. Though He, in His Mayavic garb or Image, appears to be in the heart of the universe, he in reality is everywhere and no limitation in space or time can bind Him. These truths are taught to us in a practical way by the establishment of Temples by the Great Hindu Seers. For the knowledge of the details of comparison between the Hindu Temple with its several parts and the manifested universe with all its grades of differentiation, recourse must necessarily be had to a qualified Guru or Teacher approached in the proper way. It may

generally be said that the Hindu Temple, instead of making men have a wrong belief that God is not outside the Temple (as the questioner feared, vide para 3 above), teaches that He is the very Soul of the universe and that the latter has its very existence in Him. A map of India does not show that India is not outside the limits of the sheet of paper on which the map is drawn, but through it are taught matters relating to the vast Peninsula.

No devotion without form.

15. The questions to be considered next are—whether it is absolutely necessary that there should be any form or Image to create religious devotion in man—if so necessary, how there have been pious Saints among the Christians and the Muhammedans who condemn Image-worship—and whether the investigations by the Western scientists who have ascertained the properties of formless Ether and Electricity do not show that form is not necessarily required for mental contemplation. By devotion is ordinarily meant the yielding of the heart to the Supreme in piety and love. It includes an ardent longing on the part of the devotee to reach the Almighty. Devotion, in this ordinary sense of the term, has Duality as an element and necessarily implies separateness of God (the object of devotion) and the devotee. Each is taken to be existing outside the other, and the result of devotion is the

bringing about of the union of the two, to put it more correctly, the annihilation of the seeming separateness between the two. This disappearance of the illusive separateness which is the cause of all bondage is denoted by the term Liberation or Mukti. Bhakti or devotion is necessary as long as Liberation is not realised. In absolute Liberation from conditioned existence there can be no duality, and devotion, in the above sense, can have no reference to that State of Final Moksha. In devotion the means of separation between God and the devotee are twofold. There is the mind of the devotee which is the creation of Avidya, through which he contemplates on Eswara, and also there is the phenomenal coat of Eswara, created by His Maya. The devotee can contemplate only through the mind, and Eswara can be contemplated upon only with His coat of Maya. The mind being itself limited can grasp the nature of Eswara only under Limitation, the work of Maya. The Supreme has to put on the cloak of such limitation in order that the mind of the devotee may reach Him.[1] It is in fact this limiting cloak of Maya that gives Him His appearance as Eswara. His truer nature, no doubt,

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1. चिन्मयस्याद्वितीयस्य निष्कलस्याशरीरिणः ।
उपासकानां कार्यार्थं ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना ॥
(रघुनन्दनधृतवचनम्)

knows no limitation, but that nature has nothing to do with devotion and it has reference to the Ultimate State wherein the worshipped and the worshipper are one. Hence, to make contemplation of God possible through the mind, He assumes some Form as under limitation. Some Form or other is assigned to Him by all the religions of the world. Apart from such Form even the Christians and the Muhammedans cannot think of Him. The Christian is asked to believe that the Almighty has His own beautiful Form in which He is ever shining in the Blissful Heaven. Mental conception is not possible without Form at all. But, this Form does not belong to His true nature, and it is only indicative of Him. It is no doubt true that physical scientists have ascertained the properties of Ether and Electricity which by themselves bear no visible form. But, the question is whether even scientists have any the least mental conception of Ether and Electricity as altogether apart from their concrete manifestations such as light, heat, sound and motion. It is through these formful manifestations of them their very existence is inferred and their nature ascertained. These manifestations are in the first place studied and investigated and the abstract nature of Ether and Electricity is subsequently generalised. Pure unmanifest Electricity can never be cognized, not even by the scientist. It must put on some form to be brought within cogni-

tion. Mere abstractions cannot be the object of cognition, and they have no independent existence even in the mind of the scientist apart from their formful expressions. A Mathematician no doubt builds up his abstract conception, for instance, of triangles, and the Moralist his conception of abstract virtues, but even these can never have any such conception altogether apart from concrete instances. When such abstract conceptions are described by them, they must, of necessity, be just then thinking of some particular representations of the abstract notions. The very constitution of the mind of man is such that it cannot grasp anything which is not limited and which does not appeal to any of the five organs of sense-limitations, either by way of present sensation, or by way of memory of the past one, or by way of imagined sensation. Hence, in all religions, God is represented as wearing some sort of limitation or Form, and devotees have thus been made able to have some definite tangible conception of Him. Some such Form is absolutely necessary, for without it devotion is impossible. The mind of the man who wants to think of God without form may perhaps rise very high, but, seeing that it can stick to no hold of form above, it will soon descend to the world of temporal pleasure and constant suffering. A stone thrown up in the air must sooner or later come down.

Forms, mental and physical.

16. Such form may be mental or physical, and it does not much matter which.[1] All forms are impermanent and therefore unreal, whether physical or mental. The Christians and others have adopted only mental forms and they send their prayers up to the Divine Feet of the Lord in Heaven. They shut their eyes, form a mental picture of the Lord and contemplate on His Glory. This, no doubt, is very good. The Aryan Hindu however is not satisfied with a mental Image alone. He adopts also physical Images for worship. If a mental Form or Image can be justifiably used in devotion to God, there is no reason why a physical Image also cannot be used. There is no special virtue in the use of the mental Image alone. If Idolatry is condemned because Omnipresent God should not be taken as bearing the form of a physical Image, people who assign to Him a mental Image, that is to say, who mentally picture to themselves that He, though Infinite in all respects, has a body and is sitting on a gold throne in Heaven, in the immensity of His power and Glory, are none the less guilty of Idolatry. If the use of Image, physical or mental, is by itself an

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1. शैली दारुमयी लौही लेप्या लेख्या च सैकती ।
मनोमयी मणिमयी प्रतिमाष्टविधा स्मृता ॥
(भागवतम्—११—२७.)

offence, it is brought home to all alike, whether Hindu or Christian. The latter is as much an Image-worshipper as the former. The latter must only examine how the use of mental Image alone can be justified, while that of physical Image cannot be.

The higher teaching of Hinduism.

17. From the point of view of the Aryan Hindu any Image may be used, and he knows also the reason why the Christians and others do not use physical Images. Most of these other religionists think that their religions posit the existence of a Personal God having His seat in Heaven and governing from there the universe created by Him. The idea that He is in Heaven alone is most prominent in their minds. That His is the ensouling Life even in the objects of the physical world does not appear to have been taught to them in plain terms. When the devotee kneels down in the church and meditates on Him, he closes his eyes because he believes that his physical eyes can see no object which may be His Vibhuthi or form, and because he thinks that the Lord is far away from this world of ours, and that, if He, Who is in Heaven, should be reached now at all, it can only be by the mind sent upwards to Heaven without being hindered by any physical sensation. If the Aryan Hindu also were taught in a similar way that his Eswara, who is the guiding Soul of the

universe, is sitting in Kailasa or Vaikuntha alone and is ruling from there, and that there is no higher truth than this, Image-worship, as it obtains now, would surely not have been prescribed at all. The Hindu is taught to be more ambitious. He is told that the Father in Heaven is Himself only a manifestation, though the highest one, of the Omnipresent Absolute Self. He is taught to realise the existence of that Impersonal Infinite Self, not in Heaven alone, but in the very physical world in which he himself is.[1] He is taught to have his God *here and now.* To him there is no *going* to Heaven to see Him. God is everywhere and is therefore here also. Heaven is here, not anywhere else. Every object of this world is a manifestation of His existence. He is told again that the Reality in himself also is that same One Self, and he is trained in the practice of Image-worship in order that he may realise the oneness of the Self in his own personality, in all objects and beings seen around him, and also in everything else that is unseen.[2] It cannot

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1. अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ।
(बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् ४) (काठकोपनिषत् ६)

2. हृदि ह्येष आत्मा । (प्रश्नोपनिषत्. ३)
यथा समाधित्रितयं यत्नेन क्रियते हृदि ।
तथैव बाह्यदेशेऽपि कार्यं द्वैतनिवृत्तये ॥
अध्यस्तजगतो रूपं नामरूपमिदं द्वयम् ।

be that the Founders of other religions did not know this Ultimate Truth of the Absolute Unity of the Self. As a matter of fact, they have taught that God is omnipresent and is in the very heart of man. These ideas, it appears, have not been worked out fully in those other religions, and practical training is not so modelled as to ensure their complete realisation in actual experience. It is very likely that such Founders, considering the stage of the mental and the spiritual development of the people among and for whom the new religions were established, did not think it necessary, and perhaps even thought it unwise and improper, that the highest Truth should be plainly revealed to them, the Truth that could be rightly understood only by the most advanced among God's devotees. The mode of training of such people appears to have been so prescribed as to be in conformity with the degree of their advancement. A

नामरूपे पृथक्कृत्य ब्रह्मण्येव विलापयन् ।
अधिष्ठानं परं ब्रह्म सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयम् ।
यत्तदेवाहमित्येव निश्चितात्मा भवेद्ध्रुवम् ॥

(सर्व—वेदा—सि—सा—सं)

यावत्सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भावो नोपजायते ।
तावदेवमुपासीत वाङ्मनःकायवृत्तिभिः ॥

(भागवतम्—११—२९.)

beginner in the study of Chemistry is only trained to analyse and find out the elements of a comparatively simple compound, while an advanced student of Chemistry is given a piece of salt which tries hard all his powers of analysis and which exhibits in the first instance properties almost quite the reverse of those of its component elements. While Hinduism, by prescribing Physical-Image-worship, trains its votaries to try in a number of ways to realise the presence of the Supreme Universal Self in the very stone kept in front of them, the stone which possesses, in the eyes of the ordinary man, attributes just the reverse of those of the Most High,[1] the other religions almost rest satisfied with the training of their infant followers in the belief of the existence of a Personal God, the Father in Heaven.

Image-worship necessary for all.

18. The Aryan Seers, in prescribing Image-Worship, have so arranged that the beginner in Upasana or Worship as well as the advanced student of Atma-Vidya may both equally adopt it. The former adopts it because he can have no adequate idea of the Impersonal, Absolute Self, and requires

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1. एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।
दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥
(काठकोपनिषत्. ३)

some tangible form for devotion to attract the attention of his roaming mind away from the wide world of sensation. The advanced student also adopts it because, having had theoretically the information about the truth of Absolute Monism, he wants to bring this truth within his own actual realisation by trying to discern the presence of the Universal Self in, and to dive deep into the Noumenal Reality of, the very Image before him.

Mind and Creation of Forms.

19. Next arises for consideration the following question:—"Even supposing that formful Image is necessary for exercise in devotion, why should there be prescribed definite forms of Image without allowing each devotee to create his own forms?" The very fact that the mind of man creates diverse forms is the reason for prescribing definite forms for the purpose of worship. This purpose will itself be defeated if the mind is allowed to create new forms whenever it is turned devotionally. A chief object of Image-Worship is to prevent the mind from being actively engaged in the creation of forms. This is done by compelling the mind to confine all its activities to some one chosen form which is taken as the symbol of the Supreme Self. Even this form is by itself only of a secondary value, being but the means to an end. Because, the mind cannot without a hold of form, stick

on to anything, much less continuously do so, some form has of necessity to be adopted as symbolising, for the time being, the Final Object of devotion.

Image not to be often changed.

20. The form ought not to be constantly changing, and it must be helpful in the keeping up of steady continued devotion. The banks of the Divine channel must be kept intact aud firm, without change, to allow unimpeded the continuous flow of devotional feeling towards the Supreme One. Repeated contemplation and acts of worship through the same form will take the devotee to the Final Goal more surely and swiftly. As in the case of the ordinary paths, so in the Path Divine also previous acquaintance and repetition lead to better facility of passage through it. It is unnecessary and wasted labour to be cutting new channel every time there has to be a flow, or preparing new pathway every time one has to walk. We should secure once for all some one desirable form or Image to be used in worship, and this same form must continue to be used without putting the mind to the unnecessary trouble of manufacturing different forms every time there is worship. Form-making is, as already stated, only of secondary importance. All that is required is that some one particular form must be properly chosen and strictly adhered to.

21. But the nature of the chosen form should be such as to hasten the devotee towards the attainment of the Final Object, and it should be more or less capable of representing, and reminding the devotee of, the nature of the Great One Who is to be worshipped through the form. Either such form has to be newly prepared, or the selection of such form has to be made from out of the innumerable forms which make up, or have appeared in, the universe. The universe of forms is itself the creation of the form-maker, the mind. Some forms are created by individual-or-Jeeva-minds and the others by the Universal Mind of the Supreme. The beauty, the stability and the usefulness of forms depend upon the nature of the mind from which they originate. Of the several forms available for use in worship, those created by the Supreme are superior to those created by Jeeva-minds, and among the latter those created by saintly Devotees are superior to those already created or then and there created by the ordinary worshipper. Hence it is that some one of the Divine Forms of the Great Avataras or Incarnations of the Lord Himself, or any one of the several forms through which the Great Seers, after long, steady contemplation, realised the Sacred Presence of the Lord, is directed to be adopted by the intending worshipper. These prescribed forms alone truly represent the nature of the Divine. The ordinary

Choice of Image.

man has only to adopt some one of these prescribed forms. If he is so fortunate as to have faith in a Guru or Divine Teacher, exactly the right one among such forms will be chosen for him by the Teacher. The ordinary man by himself is in many cases incompetent to make the selection of, and much more so to create, the right form or Image. In fact, there is no necessity at all to create any new form for use in contemplation, even supposing that the ordinary man is capable of creating proper forms. The only thing that is required is the drinking of nectar from the sea of Ananda or Bliss. When there are already gold vessels prepared for us which we may use for the drinking, we should be most imprudent to make our own clumsy vessels made of our sandy mind-stuff. The vessel, by itself, is of no consequence whatsoever, and, prudent as we claim to be, we have only to take some one of the ready-made beautiful vessels and drink of the sea of Bliss. It is better to use the ready-made vessel and drink of Bliss immediately than to be ever-and-all-busy in the preparation of a vessel without having time to reach the sea.

Necessity for different Ideals.

22. The question then to be considered is :— "if there should be at all any necessity to fix the form of Image, why should there have been prescribed many such fixed forms for contemplating on the One Supreme Self, thereby necessitating a selection

of some one particular form out of the many ?" The answer to this question has reference to one of the chief exceptional merits of Hinduism. As pointed out before, all the religions of the world deal with devotion through Image. While in Hinduism both mental and physical Images are used for contemplation, in the other religions mostly mental Images alone are prescribed. Even as regards mental Images, these other religions, such as Christianity, assign only one form or phenomenal appearance to the Supreme Lord, and direct that every one who professes the religion ought to contemplate on Him only through the single particular form so prescribed. [It is to be noted that even such particular form is not well-defined.] In the ancient Aryan Faith, however, different definite forms are assigned to the Lord, and the devotees are directed to adopt for contemplation such alone of those forms to which their hearts are attracted.[1] People differ widely from one another in respect of spiritual qualifications and training. Amply recognising this fact, Hinduism makes different provisions for different Bhaktas of varying degrees of advancement. What is sufficient food for the child is grossly insufficient for the adult. What is good for the latter may even be dangerous to the former. What is delicious to the rustic may be

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1. महापुरुषमभ्यर्चेन्मूर्त्याभिमतया पुनः ।

(भागवतम्. ११—३)

nauseous to the refined. What is beautiful to one may be intensely repugnant to another. Men are born with varying tastes, qualities and capabilities. These men, in order that they may rise in the scale of spirituality, have to be shown different ideal existences that may be possible for them to aspire to from their present respective positions. Devotion is the longing of the heart for union with the Ideal. The nature of the Ideal presented to the devotee must be capable of winning his heart, as the heart is at present constituted. A presentment of an Ideal too high to be appreciated with benefit by a devotee is worse than useless to him; an Ideal which falls below the mark of an aspiring advanced student of Atma-Vidya is likewise also of no help to him. Hence, the Supreme Self, though One and Undifferentiated, is in the ancient Aryan Religion considered as presenting Himself as a number of different Ideals by appearing under a variety of forms, in order to attract and elevate men of all grades of development and to turn them all in the ways of religion leading up to the Summit of Truth.

How different Ideals appear.

23. These Ideals arise in the Infinite Self by virtue of His triple aspect (Sat, Chit, Ananda) generating differentiation through the corresponding triplicity of Gunas (Satwam, Rajas, Tamas) of

His Power or Maya Sakti. The points of distinction among the Ideals have reference to the extent of the relative predominance of some of the Gunas or qualities over the others. Men also differ from one another because of the relative varying proportions of the Gunas of their inner nature. By virtue of these varied differences in qualities people widely differ in respect of their aspirations and ideals. The Ideals are but the personifications of the Highest One Self under name and form (Namarupe) which appropriately indicate the internal Gunas or qualities that are prominent for the time being. Though Ideals differ from one another, yet, so far as the inmost Reality, the Noumenal, of the Ideals is concerned, It is, and can be, only One in all of them. Devotees, being themselves within the bonds of limiting 'name and form' and characterised by some predominant Gunas, have to be severally given Ideals which bear the appropriate 'name and form,' and which exhibit appropriate Gunas that can with effect captivate their hearts.

Eswara and Gnana-Sakti—Universe in conception.

24. The manifestation of the One Supreme Self in the form of multiplicity of Ideals is not merely imaginative, but is an actual fact. In the very emanation of the Finite Universe out of the Infinite, the Self puts on in succession three different, rather, three sets of different appearances which form the Supreme Trinity of the ancient

Aryan Religion. All the Ideals described in the Sacred Books of this religion are but this Trinity and the numerous personifications of particular aspects of this Trinity. We shall consider briefly what this Trinity is. The universe emerges out of the Infinite Noumenal Self through His Power, Maya-Sakti, the Form-making or Female Principle in the Infinite, the Mother of the Phenomenal. It is said, there has to be considerable and varied exercise of this Power, much of pre-natal development, as it were, before a tangible universe comes out in full manifestation. Before the beginning of the conception of the universe the Self alone subsists in His Infinitude of blissful existence, having His Power or Sakti locked up in Himself. Maya-Sakti is then thoroughly non-active, the equilibrium of Gunas being preserved, as observed in a previous discourse. When He is about to contemplate the emanation of a universe, this equilibrium becomes disturbed and as the first result of such disturbance the Satwic aspect of Maya is manifested, and the Self, considered along with this Satwic Maya, is known by the name 'Eswara'. Satwa Guna has reference to Light or Consciousness. This Satwic Maya of Eswara is therefore called also Gnana-Sakti, Power of Knowledge or Consciousness. This Gnana-Sakti is none separate from Eswara. She has no existence independently of Him. She is, in fact, indivisible from Him. She is, as it were, part and parcel

of Him. Eswara in consequence appears as Ardhanareeswara—half-male, half-female. And the future emanation of the universe is to be from Them both. Eswara is the Father[1] of the universe, and His Sakti is its Mother.[2] By the union of the Two the universe is conceived.

Vishnu and Ichchha-Sakti—subtle Universe.

25. By such conceiving is meant the appearance of a Centre of Consciousness around which the future universe is to be built. The Soul or enlivening Self of this Centre of Consciousness, appearing in the vast unlimited ocean of the Unmanifest, is called 'Narayana.' As He appears by virtue of the union of Eswara with Satwic Maya, generally known as Uma or Sakti-Devi, He is considered as Their Son.[3] In

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1. सर्वेषां जनकं परम् । (पञ्चब्रह्मोपनिषत्)

2. श्रीकृष्णः—ततो मां जगतो माता ।
(महाभारतम्—आनु—प—२५)

3. उमाशङ्करयोर्योगस्स योगो विष्णुरुच्यते ।
(रुद्रहृदयोपनिषत्)

......रुद्रो......हिरण्यगर्भं पश्यत जायमानम् ।
(तैत्तिरीयारण्यकम् १०—१०)

......रुद्रः...... देवानां प्रथमं आद्यं हिरण्यगर्भं पुत्रस्थानीयं जायमानं योनिस्थानीयादस्मात्परात्मनः उत्पद्यमानं पुरस्तात्कल्पादौ पश्यत । (तै—आ. भ. भा. भा.)

another sense He is the brother of Sakti-Devi, as He appeared as a Centre of Consciousness along with the appearance of the Satwic Devi Herself. The nature of the Centre of Consciousness is largely resembling that of Sakti or Power of Consciousness. The characteristics of Narayana so much resemble those of the Satwic Sakti-Devi that Narayana is Himself considered as representing the female counter-part of Eswara[1]. The appearance of Narayana as the Consort of Eswara and Their joint appearance as Harihara (analagous to Ardhanareeswara) as shown in the Puranas may all be understood in the light of these facts. Narayana being in His inception the Soul of the Centre of Consciousness merely, He can only be passively receptive, and, for actively creating the universe, He requires a Power competent to bring about activity. He is consequently united to Ichchha-Sakti, Power of Desire, another aspect of Maya-Sakti in which Rajo-Guna is more predominant. This Ichchha-Sakti is the Supreme Wielder of destinies. She is called also Lakshmi. It is through the aid of this Ichchha-Sakti,

......रुद्रो......हिरण्यगर्भं जनयामास पूर्वं ।
(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्)

1. रुद्रात्प्रवर्तते बीजं बीजयोनिर्जनार्दनः ।
(रुद्रहृदयोपनिषत्)

विष्णुर्विश्वजगद्योनिः । (शरभोपनिषत्)

that is to say, by the exercise of His Power of Desire, Narayana is able to weave around Himself a definite, huge, yet limited, mass of fine, shining elements of matter (Bhûta-tanmatra) taken from out of the Tamasi-aspect of Maya, classifies these elements and forms out of them a subtle universe, of which the would-be concrete universe is to be only a gross counterpart. This subtle universe which is created by Narayana is, in fact, a mould of fine, shining material for the creation of the future universe. When Narayana has prepared the mould around His own Central Self, He Himself appears to have entered into the mould and become its Inmost Soul (Antaryâmî). In the course of the creation of the universe, therefore, the work of Narayana is to bring out in manifestation the primary elements of matter and to prepare with those elements the subtler portion of the universe (Sukshmaprapancha) which is the universal vehicle of Conditioned Consciousness, comprehending the whole of the coming tangible universe. He, being the Guardian-Soul of this shining massive vehicle of Light or Consciousness, is named Hiranya-Garbha and being the all-pervading Enlivener of the whole of it is also named Vishnu. The heart being the seat of emotional desire, Vishnu has made His own heart the seat of His Lakshmi or Ichchha-Sakti.

26. After the creation of the subtle universe or Sukshma Prapancha by Vishnu, another step has to

Concrete Universe—necessary.

be taken for the appearance of the concrete universe. It is only after the creation of the concrete universe, experience of good and evil by the Jeevas, according to their respective deserts (by virtue of their past Karmas) acquired by them and stored up in the previous cycle or cycles of the universe, becomes possible. Jeevas require for such experience, over and above their own subtle or Sukshma Sariras or vehicles, concrete material bodies and environments. The subtle or Sukshma Sarira of the Jeeva has no doubt all the necessary subtle organs of experience within itself, the organs of sensation and of action. But, this Sukshma Sarira with all such organs is only the instrument of experience (Bhogasadhanam), and this instrument has to be used by the Jeeva securing his stand on a firm, unyielding ground of support, the concrete material body which is on this account called Bhogayatanam. Also, the previous Karmas having been performed with physical or material bodies, many of the fruits of such Karmas have also to be experienced by means of such bodies. Again, concrete bodies require for their own up-keep concrete material environments and objects. Hence, the creation of the concrete universe becomes necessary.

27. For this end Vishnu desires, that is to say, unites with His Ichchha-Sakti or Lakshmi, to bring

Appearance of Brahma.

into existence the required gross material universe. This union of Satwic Vishnu with Rajasic Lakshmi seated in the Lotus of His own heart results in a reproduction of the Lotus, the grand symbol of the Phenomenal, from the navel of the Lord, that is to say, in a lower material plane of manifestation, from which springs forth a Mighty Being Who is to be the Creator and Ensouling Self of the concrete universe. He is known by the names 'Virat-Purusha' and 'Brahma.' For reasons similar to those referring to the inter-relationship of Eswara, Sakti and Vishnu, this Brahma is considered as the son of Vishnu and sometimes as the brother of Lakshmi. After He has made His appearance, Brahma learns from Vishnu Himself all about the Fundamental Truths relating to the universe through the Eternal Record of knowledge, the Vedas, and begins His work of creation. He is already given a pattern in the shape of Sukshma Prapancha or subtle universe, according to which He has to create the concrete one. [It must here be noted that, in the Sacred Literature, the name "Hiranya-garbha" is also very often used to denote Brahma or Virat-Purusha, because of the fact that the subtle and the concrete forms of and in the universe co-exist and are linked together.[1]]

1. स्थूलदेहं विना लिङ्गदेहो न क्वापि दृश्यते।
(पञ्चदशी—चि—प्र)

Brahma and Kriya-Sakti—Pancheekaranam of matter.

28. Before Brahma can actually create the concrete universe, He should secure the necessary materials wherewith to create it. The concrete, tangible nature of the universe cannot be brought about so long as the materials to be used in the building of the universe are in their elementary, subtle or intangible condition. The atoms of the elementary substances have to be brought together in harmonious combinations so as to bring out of them the required classes of compound substances which may serve as the atoms of the lower or concrete plane of existence. The subtle atoms of the plane of mental thoughts have to be converted into the grosser atoms of the plane of physical action. After the preparation is made of the atoms of the latter plane, physical bodies of Jeevas have to be built up with such atoms. These physical bodies are fitted up just in accordance with the corresponding subtle or mental bodies which serve as the mould for the creation of the former. The use of the physical bodies in the field of activity is just the same as that of the mental body in the field of thought. To prepare the materials and the bodies composed of such materials of the physical plane, the plane of activity, Brahma is united to Kriya-Sakti or Power of Activity or Will, the third aspect of Maya-Sakti. This Kriya-Sakti brings about the harmonious vibrations of ultra

physical atoms so as to bring them together in definite proportionate combinations to form the physical atoms, and creates physical bodies with such atoms. The concrete atoms are prepared out of the elementary atoms by the process of what is called Pancheekaranam which will be described presently.[1] Matter is of five states or conditions, namely, the solid (Prithhivi),the liquid (Apah), the luminous (Tejah), the gaseous (Vayuh) and the ethereal (Akasah). The primary atoms of each of these states of matter differ in structure from those of the others. In the building of the forms of the subtle universe these primary atoms themselves are used. Different and more complicated states of atoms are required to build up concrete forms of the concrete universe, although in this concrete universe as well the same five states of matter will be found. These latter atoms are prepared with the primary atoms by putting together portions of such atoms of all the different conditions of matter in the manner following:—Five primary atoms are taken, one of each state of matter; that is to say, one

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1. स्रष्टुकामो जगद्योनिस्तमोगुणमधिष्ठाय सूक्ष्मतन्मात्राणि भूतानि स्थूलीकर्तुं सोऽकामयत सृष्टेः परिमितानि भूतान्येकमेकं द्विधा विधाय पुनश्चतुर्धा कृत्वा स्वस्वेतरद्वितीयांशैः पञ्चपञ्चधा संयोज्य पञ्चीकृतभूतैः......... असृजत्।

(पैङ्गलोपनिषत्)

ethereal atom, one gaseous atom, one luminous atom, one liquid atom and one solid atom. Each one of these five atoms is divided into two halves. One of the halves is kept separate and the other half is again subdivided into four half-quarters. Thus, each one of the atoms is divided into five portions, one of them being a half and the others being each one-eighth. To prepare an ethereal concrete atom, the ethereal half atom is taken, and to it is added an one-eighth portion of each of the gaseous, the luminous, the liquid and the solid atoms. Thus, an ethereal concrete atom is a compound of portions of the primary atoms of all the five conditions, but having more of the primary ethereal atom than of the other atoms. In the same way, in each of the concrete gaseous, luminous, liquid and solid atoms we find the same proportions taken out of the corresponding primary atoms. As each of the concrete atoms is a compound of portions of all the five states of primary matter, the process of forming the atoms is called Pancheekaranam, the concrete atom being itself called Pancheekrita atom as opposed to the primary or Apancheekrita atom.

Position of Saraswati.

29. It is the supreme Kriya-Sakti of harmonious activity, Who is united to Brahma and Who is called Saraswati, that brings about the Pancheekaranam of matter and also creates the concrete universe of forms composed

of Pancheekrita matter. The creation of dense, iner-matter being Her work, She is considered as representing the Tamasic aspect of Maya. As Kriya-Sakti, She is the Power of Active Will of the Supreme. In the case of an ordinary man, his character and merit are tested by his "Power of Will." This "Power" belongs to his inmost nature, and it is with this "Power of Will" he is able to control his other natures. As observed in another connection, he is able to direct by the exercise of his "Power of will" what thoughts and desires shall occupy, or be retained in, his mind and what shall be banished from it, and also what movements his physical organs of action shall exhibit and what they shall not. Though, in all cases of voluntary activity, thoughts and desires precede action, they are but ancillary to the will which is the real prompter of all action and controller of thoughts and desires. This will, being such controller, belongs to a plane of existence superior to the planes of thoughts, desires and actions. The power of will in man seems to proceed from his very inmost Soul. Similarly, the Supreme Kriya-Sakti or Saraswati seems to have directly proceeded from the Ultimate Universal Noumenon, the Infinite Absolute Self, and is considered as ranking equally with the very first manifested Appearance of the Self, namely, Eswara Himself. Hence, we find it mentioned that Saraswati is the Sister of Eswara. As is the Sister, so is also

the Brother considered as showing forth the Tamasic aspect of Maya, because Eswara is the Supreme Ideal of thorough renunciation or absolute inaction and is also the Final Absorber of the whole manifested universe unto Himself, when its life-period is over, by the destruction of all name and form which are the pillars of conditioned or limited existence, which create all the distinction between the actor, the action and the thing acted upon, and which bring about individualisation, the root of all evil. From the point of view of the limited busy universe, His silent work of destruction is indeed an extremely dark event and is therefore Tamasic.

Marriage—its significance.

30. Eswara, Vishnu and Brahma, with Their respective Consorts, Sakti (Gnana Sakti), Lakshmi (Ichchha Sakti) and Saraswati (Kriya Sakti), form the Supreme Trinity of the Aryan Religion. The above mentioned union with the consort in each case is a spiritual union, and this is illustrated in the shape of grand Marriage Festivals of the Hindu Temples. Among the Aryan Hindus even the ordinary marriage between man and woman is a spiritual union, the union of Soul with Soul, and a large part of the ceremony of the Hindu marriage results in a religious Samskara or Purification intended to advance the spiritual progress of the individuals

brought together by the union. In the eyes of the one who knows the real object and the secret of the Hindu marriage, the marriage festivals of the Aryan Temple are the enactment of mighty events relating to the origin, the preservation and the dissolution of the whole universe. With the invasion of gross materialism and blinding ignorance on the Aryan Sacred Soil, the ideas of marriage have largely changed, and the fallen sceptic Hindu of the present age has no better notion of the marriage relation than the one obtaining among the new, so-called civilised, nations of the West. Very naturally, in his view, marriage is primarily connected with the low pleasures of conjugal life, and he does not know that the Hindu wife is Dharma-Patni, the helper of the husband in his acts of religious merit and that the husband is the spiritual Guru of the devoted wife, the relationship between them being analogous to that between a Brahmachari and his Guru or teacher.[1] Blinded as he is by ignorance, and depraved as are his notions of marriage in human society, he cannot but believe that, when the Almighty is taken as assuming human forms for the helping of the Jeevas, when marriage festivals

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1. वैवाहिको विधिः स्त्रीणां संस्कारो वैदिकः स्मृतः ।
पतिसेवा गुरौ वासो गृहार्थोऽग्निपरिक्रिया ॥

(मनुस्मृतिः २—६७.)

are conducted in the Aryan Temples for Gods and Goddesses, and when offerings, indicative of the spirit of renunciation in the devotee, are made to Them, the Supreme is also considered as being subject to all human wants and weaknesses. In the view of such a man it is no doubt impossible to dissociate all notions of ordinary human frailties from the One Who is worshipped through human form, and it is no wonder that he objects to Image-worship on the grounds stated already in the early part of this discourse.

Sakti-Devi.

31. Before the beginning of every Maha-Kalpa or Grand Cycle of the universe, that is to say, in Pralaya or the state of dissolution or non-manifestation, the Absolute Self, in His Infinitude of Existence, is as such alone present. That Self is known as "Witness" (Sakshichaitanya) when considered along with His own Supreme Unmanifest Maya. He indicates the beginning of a universe by allowing this His Infinite Power or Maya-Sakti to put forth a partial manifestation as Satwic Maya, and by Himself appearing as Eswara. Eswara is the First Cause of the universe. Satwic Maya or Gnana-Sakti is, no doubt, the Mother of Light or Consciousness, but this Light or Consciousness, having sprung from only a partial or limited aspect of the Supreme Unqualified Maya-Sakti (Satwic Maya being qualified by the ascendant Satwa Guna), is itself

only conditioned Light or Conciousness. Satwic Maya or Sakti- Devi, being, as it were, the Primary Veil (Avaranam) over the Self, is the Origin of the conditioning of the Absolute Consciousness of the Supreme, and Progenitor of all limitations that are the source of ignorance and Samsara, of bondage and immovability. She is therefore also called Avarana-Sakti and appears as dark coloured by the side of Her Lord, the Pure, Uncoloured or White (Suddha-Sphatika-Sankasha), Unlimitable, Supreme Eswara. Although from our standpoint of view, that is to say, from the point of view of the universe, the first appearance of Sakti-Devi or Gnana-Sakti is an event of mighty glory, still from the point of view of the Supreme Self, Her appearance, followed by the train of Samsara, is but a dark event. Hence, she is coloured dark. Again, as Eswara is the First Cause of the universe, He is also its Final Consumer or Destroyer, as already stated. He has in Himself the beginning and the end of the universe. In union with Gnana-Sakti He brings into existence the Supreme Lord of the subtle universe, the Satwic Vishnu or Hiranya-Garbha, Who in His turn, through His Rajasic Ichchha-Sakti or Lakshmi Who, by virtue of Her wavering and out-spreading character, is also called Vikshepa-Sakti, produces out of Himself the Rajasic Brahma or Virat Purusha. Again, as stated above, this Brahma, being united to Tamasic Kriya-Sakti or Saraswati, otherwise called also by the name

Sthhoola-Sakti, creates the concrete universe[1]. When the life-period of the universe is over, this concrete universe becomes dissolved into the subtle universe, Brahma being merged in His Source, Vishnu, and His Tamasic Kriya-Sakti merged in the Ultimate Maya-Sakti, and then the subtle universe itself is withdrawn into Himself by Vishnu Who, on the final merging of His Rajasic Ichchha-Sakti in the same Unqualified Maya-Sakti, becomes one with Eswara, under the influence of Satwic Gnana-Sakti. Eswara allows thereupon His own Satwic Gnana-Sakti also to be merged in the pure Unmanifested Maya-Sakti, and, thereby Himself giving up His Eswaratwam, remains as ever the One Absolute Infinite Self. It is Satwic Maya or Gnana-Sakti of Eswara that both begins the

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1. गुणसाम्याऽनिर्वाच्या मूलप्रकृतिरासीत् । तत्र प्रतिबिंबितं यत्तत्साक्षिचैतन्यमासीत् । सा पुनर्विकृतिं प्राप्य सत्वोद्रिक्ताव्यक्ताख्यावरणशक्तिरासीत् । तत्प्रतिबिंबं यत्तदीश्वरचैतन्यमासीत् । ईशाधिष्ठिता परशक्तितो रजोद्रिक्ता महदाख्या विक्षेपशक्तिरासीत् । तत्प्रतिबिंबितं यत्तद्धिरण्यगर्भचैतन्यमासीत् । स महत्तत्वाभिमानी स्पष्टास्पष्टवपुर्भवति हिरण्यगर्भाधिष्ठितविक्षेपशक्तितस्तमोद्रिक्ताहंकाराभिधा स्थूलशक्तिरासीत् । तत्र प्रतिबिंबितं यत्तद्विराट्चैतन्यमासीत् । स तदभिमानी स्पष्टवपुस्सर्वस्थूलपालकः ।
(पैङ्गलोपनिषत्)

creation and completes the dissolution of the manifested universe. Gnana-Sakti turned outwards leads to its creation, and Gnana-Sakti turned inwards is the cause of its dissolution. The former brings about limited phenomenal existence, and the latter points to the Infinite Noumenal Self by the destruction of everything phenomenal. The former results in action and worry, and the latter ends in absolute renunciation and peace. Hence, Sakti-Devi of Eswara has two aspects, the one as the Source or Mother of the phenomenal universe and the other as the Cause of its dissolution. Eswara, by Himself, is neither the First Cause of the universe nor its Destroyer. It is by reference to His Sakti-Devi He is described as such Cause and Destroyer[1]. Sakti-Devi is Herself, the primary Cause of limitation which is at the root of the universe and also the Power that works out the final destruction. Sakti-Devi is considered as dark coloured because also of this fact that Hers is the work of destruction of all forms and activities. For another reason also, which is already indicated, Her Lord, Eswara, is Himself described to be Tamasic, irrespective of Her work of destruction. From the point of view of limited activity and conditioned consciousness,

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1. उत्पत्तौ च विनाशे च कारणं यं विदुर्बुधाः ।

(महाभारतम्—अनु—प—१६)

the state of Supreme Renunciation and of Unconditioned or Absolute Chit or Light of Consciousness of Eswara Who is the Lord of, and transcends, Maya, is a state of incomprehensible stillness and impenetrable darkness. Stillness and darkness are the characteristics generally of Tamo-Guna.

Supreme Ideals and their oneness.

32. The three Gunas of the manifested universe, when traced back to the Supreme Trinity, exhibit the ideals of their respective characteristics. The Rajasic activity of Selfish Humanity is represented in Brahma (the Third Cause) by His Creative activity. The Satwic goodness and light in Man is represented in Vishnu or Hiranya-Garbha (the Second Cause) by His Preservative function and the light of His universal Consciousness. The dull inertia and darkness of Tamasic natures is represented by the Absolute Renunciation, the peaceful calmness, the Supreme bliss and the unknowable Infinitude of existence of the Highest Ideal of sageliness and resignation, the Ultimate Destroyer of Duality, Eswara (the First Cause). (Compare also Pragna, Thaijasa and Viswa in Man with Eswara, Vishnu and Brahma in the universe). The common saying "the extremes meet" is typically instanced in the case of Eswara. In Him, Who is the Highest One, the lowest of the Gunas, Tamas, seems to find its

consummation. Even in this world, the highest Gnani looks[1] like the lowest idiot. In the view of the ordinary man, the Gnani and the idiot are one, and both of them conduct themselves more or less in the same way. Activity in both is confined to the bare necessaries of their physical bodies (Dehamatravasishtau) because the Gnani knows that his present material body is the only remnant of his bondage clinging on to him to be kicked up as soon as his Prarabdha-Karma shall be exhausted,[2] and because the fool identifies himself with his material body alone. However wide is the gulf that separates them as regards their internal or real merits, however different from the

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1. सांबरा वा दिगंबरा वा । न तेषां धर्माधर्मौ । न मेध्यामेध्यौ । (अवधूतोपनिषत्)

अव्यक्तलिङ्गाव्यक्ताचारा अनुन्मत्ता उन्मत्तवदाचरन्तः । (जाबालोपनिषत्)

यथा मूढो यथा मूर्खो यथा बधिर एव वा । (योगतत्वोपानिषत्)

बालोन्मत्तपिशाचवत् । जडवच्चरेत् । (नारदपारिव्राजकोपानिषत्)

2. आरब्धकर्मणि क्षीणे व्यवहारो निवर्तते । (अवधूतोपानिषत्)

idiot's worthlessness is the Gnani's immense usefulness[1] to the universe around through his ever-radiating and elevating Spiritual influence, yet, in their outward conduct, they both do not differ much. In the same way, although from the point of view of the universe of limitation Eswara may be described to be Tamasic because of His dumb silence or His dark work of destruction, yet, from the higher or truer point of view, His is just the other extreme Gunatheetha state beyond all that is limited, qualified or conditioned, His very mute speechlessness imparting[2] the Highest Truths of Atma-Vidya, and His act of dissolution opening the gateway of the most Supreme Sat-chit-ananda state of Infinite Glory, quite beyond all that is Tamasic or dark[3]. The triplicity of Gunas of the Trinity, the Triple Cause of the universe, is reproduced in the effect, the created universe. The

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1. अयं हि परमो लाभो नृणां साधुसमागमः ।

(भागवतम्—१२—१०)

2. गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु छिन्नसंशयाः ।

(दक्षि—स्तो)

3. उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् ।
ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं समस्तसाक्षिं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ (कैवल्योपनिषत्)

triple nature (because of Gunas) of the limited condition of the Jeeva is but a reflection, though in a way inverted reflection, of the nature of the Supreme. The relative merit or value of the Gunas of the condition here below has no reference to the state of the Supreme Trinity. No doubt, when speaking of the condition of limitation, Tamo-Guna is described as the lowest of the Gunas, and Satwa Guna as the highest. The terms "high" and "low" are applicable to the condition of differentiation. They cannot be used when speaking of a state which is beyond and above the state of differentiation. Eswara, Vishnu and Brahma are not Themselves within the condition of differentiation, but are the Primary Causes wherefrom proceeds the differentiated universe. The terms "high" and "low," and "superior" and "inferior," can have no application to Them. Although They show forth the highest Ideals in the three fundamental aspects, in Themselves They do not differ at all. They, along with Their repective Consorts are in fact only One Undifferentiated and Undifferentiable Supreme Self appearing in three different aspects through His own Power of Maya for the emanation, the preservation and the destruction of the universe.[1] The same One Self is known by the name 'Eswara'

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1. एषा माया भगवतः सर्गस्थित्यंतकारिणी ।

(भागवतम्—११—३.)

when considered as the Controller of the Causal Maya-Sakti working under the Divine influence of His Presence, is known by the name 'Hiranyagarbha' or 'Vishnu' when considered as the Ensouling Self of the subtle universe, and is known by the name 'Virat' or 'Brahma' when considered as the Ensouling Self of the concrete universe.[1] The very term "They" is inappropriate. Every One of the Trimurtis represents the whole of the Absolute Self; and Sakti, Lakshmi and Saraswati, and each of them, represent the whole

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1. चित्सन्निधौ प्रवृत्तायाः प्रकृतेर्हि नियामकम् ।
ईश्वरं ब्रुवते योगाः स जीवेभ्यः परः श्रुतः ॥
हिरण्यगर्भ ईशोऽतो लिङ्गदेहेन संयुतः ।
....
वैराजो देह ईशोऽतः सर्वतो मस्तकादिमान् ॥
(पञ्चदशी चि—प्र)

तत् (ब्रह्म) अत्यन्तविशुद्धप्रज्ञोपाधिसंबन्धेन सर्वज्ञमीश्वरसंज्ञं सर्वसाधारणाव्याकृतजगद्बीजप्रवर्तकं नियन्तृत्वादन्तर्यामिसंज्ञं भवति । तदेव व्याकृतजगद्बीजभूतबुद्ध्यात्माभिमानलक्षणहिरण्यगर्भसंज्ञं भवति । तदेवान्तरण्डोद्भूतप्रथमशरीरोपाधिमद्विराट् प्रजापतिसंज्ञं भवति ।
(ऐतरेयोपनिषत्– श्रीशं—भा ५)

एको देवो बहुधा निविष्टः । (मुद्गलोपनिषत्)
यश्च विश्वं सृजति विश्वं बिभर्ति विश्वं भुङ्क्ते स आत्मा ।
(शाण्डिल्योपनिषत्)

of the Ultimate Maya-Sakti. Every One of Them has in Himself or Herself the Others also. Only some of the aspects are brought out in fuller relief than the others, not that those others do not exist in the selected Moorti or Sakti at all.

Root-Self is the worshipped of all

33. The Supreme has put on the limitation of forms, shining forth as the Trinity, and thus rendered it possible for us, poor conditioned Jeevas, to bring Him within the reach of our limited, cripple minds, and to choose the appropriate form suited to our natures. One such form or one set of such forms is quite enough, and the ultimate object of devotion and worship will be wholly and completely realised through such selected form or set of forms. The nature of the selection depends upon the condition of the devotee or worshipper. It has been already pointed out that Jeevatma has three kinds of impurities, Avarana-Dosha, Vikshepa-Dosha and Mala-Dosha, which have to be got rid of before he can attain the Supreme State of Being. These Doshas relate to the different aspects of the limiting and binding Maya. Jeevatwam or individuality subsists so long as Maya, instead of being the Power merely as She is, appears to domineer over Her very Owner or Source, Atma. Doshas or impurities originate from such *domineering* Maya. To get rid

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of such impurities, the Jeeva must try to regain his control over his own nature or Power. The Dosha of the *domineering* nature should be transformed into the Merit of *controlled* Sakti or Power. The Ideals of different worshippers must differ according to the Doshas of their nature. The Supreme Ideal of the one who has only Avarana-Dosha (Root-ignorance) is Eswara Who is the Lord of Satwic Avarana-Sakti, also called Gnana-Sakti or Devi. The Supreme Ideal of the devotee who has also Vikshepa-Dosha is Vishnu Who controls Rajasic Vikshepa-Sakti or Lakshmi. The Supreme Ideal of him who has Mala-Dosha in addition is Brahma Who has under His control Saraswati Who is Tamasic Sthhoola-Sakti or Mala-Sakti. The Aryan worshipper is attracted by that particular form alone of the Trinity which represents the Ideal in reference to his own nature. Again, the devotee, whose life is characterised by the spirit of self-denial and purified by the fire of knowledge of the oneness of the all in the Noumenal Reality, has in view the goal of Absolute Renunciation, of Peace Eternal, beyond and above the state of conditioning embodiment, and he prefers the form of Ascetic[1]

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1. सर्वान्भावान्परित्यज्यात्मज्ञानयोगैश्वर्ये महति महीयते ।
(अथर्वशिरोपनिषत्)

योगिनां परमानन्दं
एषा गतिर्विरक्तानां । (महाभारत–अनु—प—१६)

Eswara, the Supreme Lord of the Burning Ground, Who accepts the ash-like Soul that alone subsists after the burning away of all his phenomenal embodiments. If the devotee's Ideal is one of service for the good of all, preserving in complete order and harmony the necessary elements and conditions of useful and helpful activity, he chooses the form of the Protecting Vishnu. If the devotee has for his Ideal the One whose immense activity results in the creation and storage of things or forms necessary for the existence and continued existence of the universe of embodiments, he contemplates on the form of Brahma. Those devotees who have not had sufficient advancement to enable them to grasp through their meagre intellect the immense glory of the above three Moortis of the Supreme Trinity are given lesser Ideals suited to their respective stages of spiritual advancement, Ideals that exhibit more or less imperfectly or partially some of the aspects of the Supreme Trinity. It is for these reasons the Holy Books say that the Adorable Ideals differ even according to castes.[1] But, this does not mean that there is relative

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1. विशेषाद्ब्राह्मणो रुद्रमीशानं शरणं व्रजेत् । (वै–स्मृ. व–का)
त्वं (रुद्रः) देवेषु ब्राह्मणोऽहं मनुष्येषु ब्राह्मणः ब्राह्मणो हि ब्राह्मण-
मुपधावति । (साम- गृह्यसूत्रम्)

superiority or inferiority among the Ideals themselves, the very manifestations of the Supreme. The fact of the matter is that whether he is a worshipper of Eswara or of Vishnu, every devotee wants to reach the Highest and believes that the One Who is the Soul inside the form through which he adores is that Highest One. He may even be mistaken as to the exact nature of the Highest One, but that his Chosen Ideal alone is the Highest and Truest One is his firm belief. He can never believe that another Ideal can be superior to his adored One. The particular One Whom he worships is the Only True Self. None else in his view can be the Supreme Being, the Root-Self or Karana-Brahma. All else are but His creation or Karya-Brahma. The Saiva Upanishats and Puranas say that Eswara (Siva) is Karana-Brahma and that Vishnu is Karya-Brahma. The Vaishnava Upanishats and Puranas say the contrary. The Advaiti or Vedantic Monist says that neither Eswara Who has as His Upadhi for manifestation the qualified Satwic Gnana-Sa..ti, nor Vishnu with His qualified Rajasic

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ब्रह्माणं विष्णुमीशानं वैश्यक्षात्रियवाडवैः ।
यथाशक्त्यर्चनं भक्त्या यत्तदीश्वरपूजनं ॥

(सूतसंहिता-ज्ञा-ख १४)

तमेव (शिवमेव) धीरो विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत ब्राह्मणः ।

(वराहोपनिषत्)

Ichchha-Sakti, nor Brahma with His qualified Tamasic Kriya-Sakti, can be the Real Karana-Brahma, the Root-Self, Who is beyond and behind the states qualified by Gunas, ever in His Infinitude of Unqualified Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. The Advaitees generally worship Eswara, sometimes even through His Image "Linga", not because Eswara, as such, is the Root-Self, but because, being the First cause, the Father of all, in Him is the Root-Self first and best manifested, because being the Witness even of the rise of Hiranyagarbha, He is the Supremest Atma adored by all, and being Himself the Loftiest Ideal of absolute renunciation, naturally attracts those who are passing through the final stage of evolution, and because, being Himself nearest to the ultimate Goal of Unmanifest, Infinite, Absolute state of the Self, He is the Knower of all and Giver, through His Gnana-Sakti, of the highest Gnana or Wisdom which is the immediate cause of final liberation from Samsara.[1] The true aim of devotion in all cases is

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1. ब्रह्मविष्ण्वादिभिः सेव्यं सर्वेषां जनकं परम् ।
ईशानं परमं विद्यात्प्रेरकं बुद्धिसाक्षिणम् ॥
स शिवस्सच्चिदानन्दस्सोऽन्वेष्टव्यो मुमुक्षुभिः ।
..................शिवस्संसारमोचकः ।

(पञ्चब्रह्मोपनिषत्)

only the Root-Self, whether taken as manifesting Himself in the form of Eswara or of Vishnu. Every devotee, whatever may be his Upasya-Deva or worshipped God, admits that the Root-Self, Karana-Brahma, is alone the Highest and Truest Self Who is

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यो देवानां प्रथमं पुरस्ताद्विश्वाधिको रुद्रो महर्षिः ।
हिरण्यगर्भं पश्यत जायमानं स नो देवः शुभया स्मृत्या संयुनक्तु ॥

ईशानस्सर्वविद्यानामीश्वरस्सर्वभूतानां ब्रह्माधिपति-
र्ब्रह्मणोऽधिपतिर्ब्रह्मा शिवो मेऽस्तु सदाशिवोम् ॥
(तैत्तिरीयारण्यकम् १०—१०—४७)

तमीशानं वरदं देवमीड्यं निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ।
यो देवानां प्रभवश्चोद्भवश्च । (श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत् ४.)

आदिदेवः सतां गतिः । रुद्रं त्रिलोकैकगुरुम् ।
(भागवतम्—१२—१०)

सर्वलोकगुरुश्चास्मि । (मैत्रेयोपनिषत्)

नास्ति शर्वसमो देवो नास्ति शर्वसमा गतिः ।
अस्य देवस्य यद्भागं कृत्स्नं संपरिवर्तते ।
एतत्परमानन्दं यत्तच्छाश्वतमेव च ।
एषा गतिर्विरक्तानामेष भावः परः सताम् ।
शास्त्रवेदांगविदुषामेतद्ध्यानं परं पदम् ।
(महाभारतं—अनु—प—१५—१६.)

श्रीकृष्णः—
अहमात्मा हि लोकानां विश्वेषां पाण्डुनंदन ।
तस्मादात्मानमेवाग्रे रुद्रं सम्पूजयाम्यहम् ।
यद्यहं नार्चयेऽयं वै ईशानं वरदं शिवम् ।

and can be Only One, and that the Srutis describe that Self as being without hands and feet and all signs of personality and individuality.[1] It is only the

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आत्मानं नार्चयेत्कश्चिदिति मे भावितात्मनः ।
मया प्रमाणं हि कृतं लोकस्समनुवर्तते ।
प्रमाणानि हि पूज्यानि ततस्तं पूजयाम्यहम् ।
न हि मे केन चिद्देयो वरः पांडवनन्दन ।
इति संचिंत्य मनसा पुराणं रुद्रमीश्वरम् ।
पुत्रार्थमाराधितवानहमात्मानमात्मना ।
न हि विष्णुः प्रणमति कस्मैचिद्वि बुधाय च ।
ऋते आत्मानमेवेति ततो रुद्रं भजाम्यहम् ।

(महाभारतं, शां- प-३४१)

श्रीकृष्णः—

विग्रहं पूजयेद्यो वै लिङ्गं वाऽपि महात्मनः ।
लिङ्गं पूजयिता नित्यं महतीं श्रियमश्नुते ।
ऋषयश्चापि देवाश्च गंधर्वाप्सरसस्तथा ।
लिङ्गमेवार्चयन्ति स्म यत्तदूर्ध्वं समास्थितम् ।
पूज्यमाने ततस्तस्मिन्मोदते स महेश्वरः ।
सुखं ददाति प्रीतात्मा भक्तानां भक्तवत्सलः ।

(महाभारतम्, अनु—प—१६१)

1. अपाणिपादो जवनो गृहीता पश्यत्यचक्षुः स शृणोत्यकर्णः ।
स वेत्ति वेद्यं न च तस्यास्ति वेत्ता तमाहुरग्र्यं पुरुषं महान्तम् ॥

(श्वेताश्वतरोपानिषत् ३)

तदपाणिपादमचक्षुश्श्रोत्रमजिह्वमशरीरमग्राह्यमनिर्देश्यम् ।

(शांडिल्योपनिषत्)

Root-Self that is worshipped by all, and it matters very little what name is given or what form is assigned to that Self. The Saivite, the Vaishnavite, and the Advaiti all contemplate on the same One Real Self, and it is indeed surprisingly inexplicable what makes, or can possibly make, some of our Aryan Bhaktas think that they are worshipping different Gods, such an idea giving rise sometimes to unnecessary controversies and baseless prejudices. All are agreed that the Root-Self, Karana-Brahma, alone is directly or indirectly to be, and is being, worshipped. Only, that Self appears as if covered by the cloaks of qualifying Gunas bearing the names of Eswara, Vishnu and Brahma, and, having assumed appropriate forms, becomes visible to the eager eyes of the devotees. Though known by different names, These three are but One in Self, and They see no difference among Themselves.[1]

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1. ये नमस्यन्ति गोविन्दं ते नमस्यन्ति शङ्करम् ।
येऽर्चयन्ति हरिं भक्त्या तेऽर्चयन्ति वृषध्वजम् ॥
ये द्विषन्ति विरूपाक्षं ते द्विषन्ति जनार्दनम् ।
ये रुद्रं नाभिजानन्ति ते न जानन्ति केशवम् ॥
(रुद्रहृदयोपनिषत्)

शिवाय विष्णुरूपाय शिवरूपाय विष्णवे ।
शिवस्य हृदयं विष्णुर्विष्णोश्च हृदयं शिवः ॥

Forms of the Trinity meaningful.

34. In the very forms so assumed indications are clear of the purpose for which they were assumed, and many of the Ultimate Truths are indirectly revealed through these forms themselves. An intelligent comparison of the forms with one another, in the light of the teaching by a properly qualified Guru, may open to us a vast store of Divine Wisdom. Every one of these forms, they being the forms of the All-pervading Supreme Self, may even be thought of as that of the Self-aspect or Noumenal aspect of any object or Image, though of a different form, used for active worship, such as Bana-Linga or Salagrama. If the faith in the existence of the Self with the Chosen Form in the Image becomes firm and the current of corresponding devotional thoughts becomes strong, steady and persistent, the Self will appear in that

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यथान्तरं न पश्यामि तथा मे स्वस्तिरायुषि ।
यथान्तरं न भेदास्स्युश्शिवकेशवयोस्तथा ॥

(स्कन्दोपनिषत्)

श्रीकृष्णः—

तस्मिन्हि पूज्यमाने वै देवदेवे महेश्वरे ।
संपूजितो भवेत्पार्थ देवो नारयणः प्रभुः ॥
यस्तं वेत्ति स मां वेत्ति वेत्ति योऽनु तं स हि मामनु ।
रुद्रो नारायणश्चैव सत्वमेकं द्विधाकृतं ॥

(महाभारतं–शां–प–३४१)

very Form and lift up the suppliant devotee to His own true state of Absolute Being, as has been the case with many a great devotee known to history. The exact nature of these forms and their proper significance can definitely be known by the student who has enough faith in the Aryan Sacred Writings and in the words of the Divine Guru.

An exceptional merit of Hinduism.

35. The prescription of these meaningful forms and the manifold provisions and directions severally made for the adoption of these forms in the exercise of devotion, according to the varying capacities and stages of development of the devotees, reveal a prominent part of the exceptional merit of the ancient Aryan Religion. Considering from every point of view, the fact is clear that Image-worship, instead of being a defect or curse of the ancient Aryan Faith, enables the Bhaktas or devotees of different degrees of development to attain the highest aim of religion, immediately or by degrees, as the case may be, with ease and facility in a practical way. The existence of Image-worship among the Aryan Hindus argues the immense depth of wisdom of the Great Ones who have prescribed it. As the one who is in the stage of devotion is still within the bonds of duality, having his physical body and his mind in the state of activity, and having individuality still subsist-

ing in him, provisions are amply made, in connection with Image-worship, for the proper engagement of his several organs of sensation (Gnanendriyani) and of action (Karmendriyani) and for the due surrendering of everything most valuable in his possession or power at the altar of the Image of the Lord by way of offerings, in a manner which distinctly shows that Image-worship makes the devotee a devotee in all respects, in thought, word and deed. The one who is advanced enough to realise the Self in the very concrete Image before him can have no difficulty in realising the Self beneath or under other forms, whether the human form of the Holy Guru or the verbal form of the Vedic Mantra. The Self realised through any form is one and the same Infinite One. Blessed are those who, by virtue of true devotion, can see the absolute identity of the Self behind all such forms, and pitiable is the fate of those who are attracted only by the form-side of things.[1]

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1. शिवविद्यागुरूणाञ्च भेदो नास्ति कथञ्चन ।
शिवे मन्त्रे गुरौ यस्य भावना सदृशी भवेत् ॥
भोगो मोक्षश्च सिद्धिश्च शीघ्रं तस्य भवेत् ध्रुवम् ।
(माधवीये)

मर्त्यबुद्धिर्गुरौ यस्य शिवलिंगे दृषन्मतिः ।
शब्दबुद्धिस्तु मन्त्रेषु स खलु ब्रह्महा भवेत् ॥
(पराशरः)

36. As devotion more and more increases in us, we may more and more swiftly pass on to the complete realisation of the Ultimate Truth, with a statement of which this series of discourses began, and of which some attempt has herein been made to get some stray glimpses. The true nature of the Everlasting, Secondless, Unlimited Self can never be adequately described by mortal words of limitation. Words of man can only *point the way to* the Ultimate Truth, and can themselves never reach It. It is our duty, however, in the beginning to try to understand, with the help of words spoken and written, the *direction* of real progress; and in due proportion to our earnestness may we be blessed with Divine encouragement[1] and guidance for actual progress onwards towards the Final Goal for all, the True Self, revealed through the Vedic Upanishats and the words of the well-qualified[2] Holy Guru. Dear

Conclusion.

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1. श्रीगुरुः—

मा भैष्ट विद्वंस्तव नास्त्यपायः संसारसिन्धोस्तरणेऽस्त्युपायः।
येनैव याता यतयोऽस्य पारं तमेव मार्गं तव निर्दिशामि ॥

(विवेकचूडामणिः)

2. श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं । (मुण्डकोपनिषत्)

श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं स्वगुरुं गच्छेद्यथाविधि ।

(रुद्रहृदयोपनिषत्)

reader, have unqualified faith in these and be guided by them.[1] Realise the most sublime ideas of their lofty teachings. Realise the God in you and in everything else besides. Realise your absolute oneness with the Self in all. Having known the real nature of the Triple-sided Maya and of Her work, the whole phenomenal existence, leave behind once for all even the highest step of the ladder of evolution of the Thinker. The ladder is no more required for you, though you may, by choosing to retain it, use it for the helping of others. Nothing more remains

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सर्वज्ञकल्पैराचार्यैर्वक्तव्या । न सा (विद्या) येन केनचित् ।
(प्रश्नोपनिषत्-श्रीशं-भा-१)

तस्माद्गुरुं प्रपद्येत जिज्ञासुः श्रेय उत्तमम् ।
शाब्दे परे च निष्णातं ब्रह्मण्युपशमाश्रयम् ॥ (भागवतं-११-३)

आचार्यस्तूहापोहग्रहणधारणशमदमदयानुग्रहादिसंपन्नो लब्धागमो दृष्टादृष्टभोगेष्वनासक्तः त्यक्तसर्वकर्मसाधनो ब्रह्मवित् ब्रह्मणि स्थितोऽभिन्नवृत्तो दम्भदर्पकुहकशाठ्यमायामात्सर्यानृताहंकारममत्वादिदोषविवर्जितः केवलपरानुग्रहप्रयोजनः विद्योपयोगार्थी पूर्वमुपदिशेत् ॥
(उपदेशसहस्री)

तस्मादिदं त्यक्तसर्वबाह्येषणैरनन्यशरणैः परमहंसपरिव्राजकैरत्याश्रमिभिर्वेदान्तविज्ञानपरैरेव वेदनीयं पूज्यतमैः प्राजापत्यं चेमं संप्रदायमनुसरद्भिरुपनिबद्धं प्रकरणचतुष्टयेन । तथाऽनुशासंत्यद्यापि त एव नान्य इति ।
(छान्दोग्योपनिषत्—श्रीशं—भा—८—१२)

1. उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत (काठकोपनिषत्—३)

to be done by you for yourself.[1] The darkness of ignorance having been swept away by the radiant glory of your very Self, you are no longer blinded by the illusion of manifestation. Distinctions between man and man, friend and foe, good and bad, pleasure and pain, high and low, are no longer for you.[2] The law of Karma has no more hold on you. You have crossed all bondage, and Absolute Liberty is yours for ever-more. Sorrow is no longer for you,[3] and yours is Eternal Bliss. Death and struggle have ceased for you, and you are All-life and All-Peace.

ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

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1. यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ (भगवद्गीता–३–१७)
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे । (मुण्डकोपनिषत्—५)

2. समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥
मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
(भगवद्गीता–१४–२४–२५)

भेदाभेदौ सपदि गलितौ पुण्यपापे विशीर्णे
मायामोहौ क्षयमधिगतौ नष्टसंदेहवृत्तिः ।
शब्दातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं प्राप्य तत्त्वावबोधं
निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां को विधिः को निषेधः ॥
(जीवन्मुक्तिविवेकः—५)

3. तरति शोकमात्मवित् (छान्दोग्योपनिषत्–७–१-३)

AN APPENDIX

A DREAM.

A DREAM.

(संसारस्स्वप्नतुल्यो हि—आत्मबोधः)

1. Launched into the vast ocean of life the Dreamer finds himself tossed to and fro by the incessant waves of pleasure and passion and knows no more. Being thus too much and too long immersed in them, he begins to feel the suffocating irksomeness of his situation. Not knowing the real cause of his suffering, he tries hard in all ways but the right one to avoid the suffering, continuing to be all the same under the waters. He believes wrongly that, by effecting some change in the juxtaposition of the elements around him, he may escape from the troubles and worries of life. He attempts in vain to secure freedom from bondage and from misery through and by means of their very source, the phenomenal elements of embodied existence. He, as one of Humanity, wants to snatch away from men and things around him as much as circumstances then and there may allow him to take for having his own good enhanced and evil lessened, crude though his notions of good and evil may then be. In so doing he has of necessity to get involved in a large conflict of complicated individual interests, and as the result of it he

Immersed in ignorance.

has more of pain and misery still. Very occasionally in the hot strife of life he so far loses his head and his balance that he is sometimes found thrown into the lower depraved condition of the sensual brute-life, and sometimes even into the dark abyss of sleepy ignorance of the dull vegetable life. After the causes that so brought him down have worked themselves out, he is once more seen amidst his human fellows. He again takes note of his relative position, tries to improve it, by hook or by crook, still without knowledge, without guide perceptible. He then gathers more experiences, gets more and more of worry and trouble, though here and there he picks up a few short moments of pleasant life.

The dawn of knowledge.

2. Knowledge then begins to dawn upon him, and he wonders what real secret may underlie all his trouble and what may this worried life of his really mean and imply. Having his gates of knowledge open, he continues to spend life-periods innumerable under different conditions of existence, gathers bits of knowledge from whatever sources available, from good and from evil, through his own experiences and through the words of others, assimilates some of them and loses hold of others, and acts sometimes in accordance with them and sometimes in spite of them.

The Dreamer and his preliminary efforts.

3. As the net result of all this, he is found passing through a kind of life having a peculiarity of its own. He is placed under circumstances not very much encouraging, yet not altogether hopeless, and within environments not very much elevating, yet not altogether undesirable. His Ideal may be high, but his capacities are poor. As regards his training, a good portion of it has been for securing him success in temporal affairs, and yet he would not give up his attempts, feeble though they are, to reach the Highest, according to his conception of the same. Being subject to opposing forces, some pulling him up, some pulling him down, and some across, he feels the ridiculousness of his position, and his success in life here and his progress towards the Ideal above are both alike partial, if not, unsatisfactory. Not being yet properly trained to go by the path of Atma-Vidya which leads up directly to the state of absolute freedom and bliss, not having any correct information about even the general nature of the path, and being sometimes tempted by some newly organized Societies which bear the mark of novelty and which contemplate, curiously enough, a more or less thorough search of the universe and all its parts for the discovery of that Ultimate Truth which seems to recede more and more as outward search proceeds and which is, as the Great Ones say, nearest to the one who is self-centred in

peace unmoving, the dreamer's progress onwards is considerably and necessarily delayed. No doubt, when one, who is plunged in the sea, makes rapid move to the right or to the left without rising up, he may perhaps experience new sensations or meet with new beings and thus add to his knowledge. But, any amount of addition of such knowledge cannot relieve him from the asphyxiating unpleasantness of his immersion. As Tennyson would have it, "knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." Unless and until the man rises, by securing true wisdom, above the water-level of his sea of troubles, the worry of life cannot leave him. The new movements and associations of the day may, no doubt, discover great facts and events not generally known before, but, they cannot in the least bring about the required relief from the trammels of Samsara. The dreamer thus lingers long in vain, and, feeling the inevitable disappointment in the end, begins in right earnest to think of his own recognized upward Path of Atma-Vidya and to search for a proper Guide to help him in the direction of True Divine Wisdom.

Guru reached.

4. Just then, in the course of a conversation with a passing friend, the dreamer receives an account of a Great One Who, though appearing in flesh and *now present* in this our physical world, transcends the phenomenal

universe completely, His only object of this life here being to offer His helping hand to those who may strive eagerly to rise up to the true state of Infinite Bliss and Peace. The dreamer thereupon, notwithstanding the obstacles in the way, runs up to Him, finds in Him the very embodiment of love and compassion, of knowledge and devotion, of austerity and simplicity, and throws himself at His Holy Feet praying for early redemption from the bonds of Samsara. The Divine Guru takes pity on him and, knowing his real situation, begins to guide him on, step by step, along the true path of Divine Wisdom. Blessed is the dreamer who, in spite of his many defects, is given the high privilege of standing, face to face, before the august presence of the Greatest Soul on earth today, making his prayers directly to Him, and receiving directly from Him instructive guidance more useful and elevating than can be ordinarily conceived.

Dreamer's broodings.

5. Thenceforward, the dreamer considers himself a different man altogether, having secured an unchangeable faith that he, being the disciple of the Holiest One, must reach the final goal of existence, the state of absolute Liberation (Moksha), in this his very present life on earth. With this faith in him, he continues to live amidst his usual surroundings, attempting to

discharge his duties both as householder and as member of his profession. His one object in so continuing is to make amends for all his past imprudence and to clear up his liabilities consequent thereon. He works and works, at any rate, thinks he works, but does not see any change for the better in his worldly circumstances. That there is something wrong somewhere is clear to him, but he has not the pluck to find out what and where it is. He continues like this for some pretty long time at the end of which he finds that the continuance of his connection with matters temporal any longer will not only fail to give him the intended result but will positively make his position and that of others considerably worse. Then, he begins to feel that he is no more justified in continuing as he does and that he is called upon to kick up, once for all, his worldly connections, one and all of them, and to lead a wandering, solitary life in peaceful contemplation.

His departure and return.

6. Thus feeling, the dreamer gets out of his earthly home, wanders far and wide alone for a short time, and then, by reason of a lingering thought in him that he has failed to discharge his liabilities in the world, he goes straight on to a Holy Resort and awaits there his time to discharge at least that kind of liability which it is even now possible for him to

discharge. The time comes and goes, and the liability is discharged though, to his greatest disappointment, not exactly in the manner in which he would wish to discharge it. In the meanwhile, his continued stay at the place aforesaid brought on to the place his nearest relations who very naturally, and properly too from their stand-point of view, spared no pains to induce him to return home; but, he could not give up his notion that he knew better. He receives then a message of command from his Gurudeva directing him to report himself personally at once before His Divine presence. The dreamer and his Holy Guru are soon afterwards seen together, the latter convincing the former that the step taken by him was not the right one and telling him that he should at once return to his bondage and be in it until the time should arrive when he will be released in a more legitimate way. In obedience to the all-loving wish of the Great One the dreamer comes back to his work-house with feelings singularly mixed and resumes again his allotted work.

Another departure and return.

7. A few years pass, and the dreamer finds himself surrounded by the numerous members of his household fondly clinging to him notwithstanding his ever-growing resolution that he should take some legitimate early step to get freed from the bonds of

Samsara. He thinks he has been sufficiently long in the family and seems convinced, beyond any possibility of doubt, that, so long as he remains in the family, however much he may try, he can neither improve his temporal circumstances nor practise renunciation, much less, renunciation without reserve, which is a necessary condition-precedent for final emancipation. He also says to himself that, if in his present life-time, in which he has had the good fortune and exceptional privilege to have His Holiness, above referred to, for his guiding Gurudeva, he is not able to reach the highest goal of life, his chances in future lives must of necessity be very few, and that, on the other hand, if he should strive hard to effect his escape from bondage by an immediate entrance into the path of absolute renunciation, bearing in mind the most wholesome teachings of the Holy Guru, he must, of equal necessity, rise up immediately, leaving down all the suffocating elements of worldliness and, crossing over the ocean of *limited* Samsaric life, reach the Supreme Goal of Bliss and Peace, absolute and eternal. He is then also found considering within himself the exact nature, the character and the practicability of a life of *complete* renunciation, and silently praying within himself for the speedy arrival of that blissful moment when he may cut away all his ties of binding Samsara. After some waiting, he thinks the moment is come, to his great relief, and once more

gets out of his confinement, now however in the mode prescribed, as he takes it. But, the all-knowing Great Guru immediately orders him back again to his cell, and the latter returns again.

His position.

8. He takes naturally some short time to get completely reconciled again to his position in the family which for some time past he has been taking enormous trouble to banish altogether from his mind. Slowly and by degrees he is *in* again, and he once more finds himself as much away from the path of thorough renunciation as he was long ago. But, there is this difference now that he has actually had some experience of the life of renunciation, which he may utilise for the shaping of his future. He has somewhat learnt what real difficulties have to be overcome and what probable temptations have to be guarded against in the actual leading of the life of renunciation. He knows now more or less definitely the distinguishing marks of real renunciation and of renunciation in appearance, that is to say, renunciation *through the mind* of all attachment and mere *physical* renunciation. Having studied his own nature under very trying circumstances, he has known better his defects and merits. With knowledge thus improved, and with the wisest counsels of his adored Gurudeva ever present in his memory, he does not appear likely to be com-

pletely carried away by the current of wordly life into which he has again entered, strong and rapid though the current may be.

A dream within the dream.

9. He is seen again amidst his co-workers in the field of his profession, busy and active as before. Sometimes, when the thoughts of the higher, truer life come to him and make him a little indifferent to his avocation, he appears somewhat dull and hopelessly forgetful. But, soon after, even a passing thought of his holy Guru's words of command suddenly floods his out-turned nature with life and energy, and he is found all-right again. In this way he pushes on, sometimes slowly and sometimes vigorously, the work of his Mission in the world amidst his busy surroundings, under the Divine guidance and help of the Great Holy Guru. The hope of his life under such guidance is the possibility of his realising, after due discharge of his wordly liabilities, at least, as far as possible, a dream of his to the following effect, a dream within the dream :—Renouncing all, pure in mind and body, and sitting in peaceful solitude, the dreamer thinks of the uplifting personality of his adored Guru as seated under the shade of a fine overhanging tree on the soft green meadow by the side of His Holy Asrama. The following events are then presented to the clear unwavering mind of the dreamer.

The Great Initiation.

10. The Divine Teacher, appearing before him, gently touches his head with His left foot through which a mighty flood of the highest spiritual force flows swiftly into the inner life of the suppliant Sishya. The dreamer, in his overflowing ecstacy, pours out in exuberance lofty sentiments of devotion and resignation couched in language too elegant and heart-appealing to proceed from him under other conditions. The all-merciful Holy Guide takes him by the hand, and initiates him into the wonderful mysteries, the merit and value, and the power and possibilities of the Great Primary Sound, the Progenitor of all the secondary vibrations that form the manifested universe, the most sacred and comprehensive Mantra taught in the end by the Sacred Upanishats, the unique Monosyllabic Pranava, which, by virtue of its triple-sidedness, explains throughly the much puzzling riddle of the universe and brings out in relief the three primary aspects of the Self, Sat-chit-ananda, and the three primary qualities (Satwam-rajas-tamas) of His Maya-Sakti, the Root-cause of all. The dreamer is then taught how a Jeevanmukta sees no universe, save now and then as reduced to its causal Sound vibration, the Primary Pranava, ever appearing and disappearing in his Infinite Consciousness, representing in truth the rise and fall of the great universe-manifestation, how, though having nothing to see, the

Jeevanmukta seems yet to see not only this springing up and this going down of the Sacred Sound but his own authorship also of it by realising the fact that when he wills to generate the Sound the Sound appears, that when he wills to continue it it continues, and that when he wills to put an end to it it is no more, and how all this he sees within himself, not outside himself, for no outside there is. It is also shown to the dreamer that, even when there is in the Jeevanmukta the so-called external perception, it is coupled with the definite realisation that everything he finds, everything he experiences, is but a manifested aspect of the triple qualified AUM generated by and within himself, that good and evil, pleasure and pain, happiness and misery, praise and ridicule, love and hate, light and darkness, knowledge and ignorance, all, in the eyes of of the Jeevanmukta, are but the phases of this One Sacred Sound which alone and nothing else he sees presented in his consciousness, and that duality moves him not, for duality there can be none for him.

In the presence of Sri Sarada.

11. After the dreamer has received this lofty teaching, both the Guru and the Sishya are in an instant seen together in the enlightening Sacred Presence of Sri Sarada (Saraswati), the Mother of all knowledge. The Divine Guru Himself prostrates before Her, entreating permission to recommend His

disciple to Her Divine Self. Taking hints from Her approving smile, the Holy Guide silently allows the dreamer to prostrate, which he does firstly before the Gurudeva and then before the Divine Mother. It is no wonder that the dreamer, being under the direct holy influence of the Mother of all knowledge and speech, is able then to express his feelings and his prayers in appropriate words coming out of his very heart. Then proceed from the Divine Mother a few choice words of encouragement and blessing which, when reaching the ears of the all-attentive devotee, seem to fill him with Ambrosial Bliss.

Brahmanda.

12. A few moments pass, and the Gurudeva places His blessing palm on the bowing head of the Sishya; and the consequence is that the latter at once feels that he is being bodily raised up, as if by magic, and soon after finds that he and his Holy Teacher are together standing before a huge imposing appearance which, a little later, he comes to know to be the representation of the Great Brahmanda—the Universe-egg—which indicates through its external colours the triplicity of the inner Gunas on which its existence depends. The dreamer is struck dumb at the huge wonderful sight, especially because of the sudden rise in him of the consciousness of the exact similitude of the great coloured phenomenon, now seen in front of him, and

of the Holy Mahalinga formerly presented to him by his Gurudeva and used by him for active worship during the period of his home-life.

The entry.

13. Knowing the huge phenomenal sight as but the formful manifestation of Eswara Who is the Life and Soul of the universe, the Great Guru, with hands uplifted in due reverence for the Supreme Lord, sends up to Him His most hearty prayers poured out in abundance in His usual exquisite language and brilliant manner. Suddenly, a large and beautifully decorated gateway is seen opened in the front, as if the Inner Self, Eswara of the universe, wanted, by creating an opening in the outer material covering of the great appearance, to receive sooner and with greater facility the sincere and eloquent pleadings and prayers of the Holy Jagadguru. Being followed by the blessed dreamer the Divine Teacher enters the gate and goes inwards showing and explaining to his disciple the phenomenal peculiarities and the purpose of everything important which is seen on their way. To state briefly, the Sishya realises that the whole manifested universe is but the holy Temple of the Supreme Lord Eswara, and that his Divine Guru is actually guiding him onwards towards the Great Central Seat of the Lord, the Fountain-head of all Life that ensouls the whole universe.

14. Swiftly they pass on leaving behind them many a vast Region (Bhooh, Bhuvah, Suvah, Mahah, Janah and Tapo Lokas) one after another, and at last they find themselves in front of another grand gateway which appears like that of a huge impenetrable fortress, and which seems to be closed against all outer Regions generally. Coming near the gateway on which is inscribed the word 'सत्यलोकः' (Satyaloka) the Guiding Acharya gently touches its mighty door which is at once laid open, and both the Guru and the Sishya are allowed entrance into that final (Seventh) Loka. Inside they go, and the dreamer, while closely following the foot-steps of his Guiding Teacher, is being then and there enlightened by Him with regard to the interesting and useful particulars of the several Sub-Regions of this highest Loka. In the first Sub-Region they find happy Souls who have thoroughly purified their nature, inner and outer, by leading the strictest celebate life and by long steady practice in the prescribed acts of good Karma done for the mere sake of duty without the least personal attachment to the fruits thereof (Naishthhika-Brahmacharinah). In the second Sub-Region are seen great Bhaktas or Upasakas whose concentrated devotion to the Supreme Lord, identifying themselves with Him, knows no bounds. In the next or third Sub-Region are found advanced Souls of

Passage through Lokas.

Gnana-Marga, who have practised true renunciation (real Sanyasa), and whose only aim is the realisation of the Highest Truth of the absolute unity of all in the Self, which is the immediate cause of final liberation from conditioned existence. Duly appreciating and respecting the immense merit of all these Great Souls who have their being severally in these Sub-Regions, the Guru and His disciple pass beyond these into the inner realities of this wonderful Loka.

Sri Kailasa.

15. In an instant they are before another large beautiful gateway which is always open, being guarded, as it were, by the foremost of Eswara's Bhaktas, Sri Nandikeswara by name, in the front, bearing the noble form of the spotless snow-white bull, the majestic personification of power and strength, of calmness and endurance, all combined, the One Whose attention is ever fixed on the Supreme Lord, the Self within, and Who is the eternal vehicle of the Self in all His varied manifestations, and by the two Divine Sons of the Supreme Self, Who represent the two main Divine Paths (the higher and the lower) of renunciation (Nivrittih) and of action (Pravrittih), that is to say, by the Ever-immaculate Senior Sri Ganesa or Vighneswara, the Patron of learning and Lord of wisdom, of non-active renunciation, the well-known Divine Thwarter of all activities of manifestation, the Chief

of the great Celestial Band of Ganas engaged in the work of destruction of all embodiments of limitation, on its right side, and by the Ever-vigilant and active Junior Sri Subrahmania, the great Commander or Senapathi of the never-ending battle of life, on its left. The Great Jagadguru, closely followed by His privileged Sishya, pays due homage to these three Divine Beings. The dreamer, considering the way in which these Mighty Beings respond to the Great Teacher and also the way in which he (dreamer) himself is treated by Them because of his being His disciple, naturally and rightly infers that his Great Guru ought to be and is much greater than he ever took Him to be, and that He cannot be, in any sense, less than or other than Eswara Himself. To the great, happy surprise of the dreamer, the two Divine Sons, Whom the dreamer somewhat feared to approach, welcomed him with open arms, with kindness unbounded, calling him Their *dearest younger brother*. The happy dreamer remained speechless, being struck by sublime wonder at the immense spiritual height to which he has been raised by the mercy of the Great Lord appearing as Sri Jagadguru. Silently, the dreamer prostrates over and over again in the elevating presence of all the Four Divine Forms, and then stands motionless, contemplating for a few minutes on all the Four, and finally fixing his opened eyes on the enchanting form of his Divine Gurudeva. The Latter, in His infinite

mercy and love, intending to clear away even the last trace of doubt or ignorance from His follower, tells him in clear terms that the Region to which they are now come is Sri Kailasa Itself, that what appears to be Kailasa to the devotee of Eswara is Itself appearing as Sri Vykuntha to the Vishnu-Bhakta and as Brahma-Loka to the adorer of Brahma, and that therefore the same One Satya-Loka bears these three different names. With doubts all removed and ignorance thoroughly expelled, and with Divine Blessings showered on him, the dreamer feels himself Divine, stronger and freer than ever before, and he stands again ready to follow the Great Guide to wherever He may take him.

Dreamer's prayer for pardon.

16. They then enter the Holy Gate and pass into the inmost recesses of the central regions of Sri Kailasa whose magnificent and dazzling splendour the dreamer, by virtue of the Great Guru's blessings, has become able not only to cognize, but to properly appreciate also. They find around them a surpassingly sublime forest scenery, the like of which is unknown in other Regions, and the dreamer, considering the beauteous excellence of everything seen about there, rightly believes that he has actually reached that loftiest plane of existence where he can hope to see, face to face, the Ideal of all Ideals, the

Supreme Lord Eswara Himself. Then, on a small shining smooth rock, beautifully cut and laid by Mother Nature, under a high glittering canopy of celestial, aromatic flowers, the Divine Gurudeva sits, as if under exhaustion, and with a characteristic smile asks His devoted Sishya to near Him; thereupon, the dreamer, approaching near, prostrates before Him, half-expressing his sense of immense gratitude to the Great Jagadguru for all the trouble He has taken on his account, and, holding somewhat firmly His Divine Feet by his hands and gently pressing his tearful eyes on the Holy Feet, prays most imploringly for unqualified pardon, prostrating as he is.

The Great Revelation.

17. Then, the Divine Voice is heard saying "Rise up." The dreamer raises his head and sees, and Behold! What a Revelation! The two Holy Feet held firmly by him are, in fact, those of the Supreme Parents of the universe found sitting on the same rock and smiling, the right Foot being that of the Divine Father Eswara, and the left Foot that of the Holy Mother Sakti-Devi seated on the supporting left thigh of the ever-ascetic Eswara. This is indeed too much for the dreamer, and he cannot contain himself any longer. Now, in the lofty exaltation of bliss, he is dancing like a child, and now, in the height of his devotional emotion, he throws himself at Their Saving Feet times

without number. Now, he is eloquent in praying, and now, he is calm and silent, wanting nothing more. Now, again, he feels for the sudden disappearance of the Sacred Form of his adored Gurudeva, and now, in his knowledge of the absolute identity of the Holy Guru with the Supreme Ones seen in the front, he finds solace and peace, real and infinite.

The Divine Son-hood.

18. Being emboldened by the very peaceful appearance of the Divine Parents the dreamer, slowly and submissively approaching Them nearer, gently raises Their Holy Feet and, first touching them with both his eyes in great reverence, softly presses them on his own bowing head. Then, passes through his clear mind a flash of further Revelation, and he distintly realises his own Divine Son-hood. As the first fruit of such realisation he is at once found to be in closer touch with the Supreme Father, freely leaning against His right leg and resting his peaceful head on His right thigh, with his devotional look fixed alternatively on the sagely contemplative face of the Great Lord and on the benign, lovely countenance of Sakti-Devi, the Mother of all. The Divine Father slowly passes His purifying and blessing palm over the body of His devoted Son and the latter feels as though a steady, voluminous current of spiritual strength is being led into his inmost Self. Then, the Blessed Son, taking hints

from the Lord, inclines similarly on the Mother's side, and, fixing his prayerful eyes on Her Noble Divine face, contemplates on the lofty sublimity of Her being.

19. The Great Mother, in the infinitude of Her love and mercy, places Her gentle palm softly on the head of Her beloved Son, blessing him so much so that the immediate result of it is that the Son and the Mother have become One. The dream continues still. But, this continuation, as it is, no words of mortal man can adequately describe. The main revealable facts and events may however be mentioned. The dreamer, who was originally but 'man,' firstly realised his own Divine Sonhood and now shines as the Great Jagat-Mother Satwic Maya Herself, the subsisting Self being the same in all.

As the Divine Mother.

20. The Holy Mother, being Herself the Supreme Gnana-Sakti, deeply contemplates on Her Lord Eswara Who is Her own Supporting Self, and on Whose eternal reality depends Her own existence as Supreme Sakti or Power. If at all She can exist, it is only along with Her Lord. Hence, the dreamer, instead of continuing to appear as the Mother alone, now appears as both the Father and the Mother together.

As the Divine Father and Mother.

21. Again, there is the subsisting knowledge that, as mere Power or Sakti, as apart from the Lord Self Whose Power She is, the Great Mother Herself has and can have no independent existence. As Supreme Sakti She is, as it were, a part of Him, and the dreamer, who appeared as both the Parents, is in consequence then appearing as Ardhanareeswara (half-male, half-female).

As Ardhanareeswara.

22. Then, again, by virtue of the final Truth that Sakti or Power, as apart from the Self or Atma, has no reality whatsoever, and that Atma alone is *real*, in the strict sense of the term, the dreamer, in the end, shines as the Sole Secondless Atma of the universe, the Supreme Purusha, the Father without the Mother, the One Ultimate Self that appears as the all. When this highest stage is reached, the true nature of the dream is self-revealed. Awake in the Self the dreamer sees not Not-Self. The dream and the dreamer, as such, are both unreal, and they seemed to exist as long as the Seer (Drik) or experiencer was distinguishable from the Seen (Drisyam) or experienced. Now that the Seer and the Seen are one in the Self, the dreamer and the dream have alike merged in the absolute Unity of the Self.

The Supreme Realisation.

ओं तत्सत् ॥

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This book is really worth reading but not for those who are not worth to read it

